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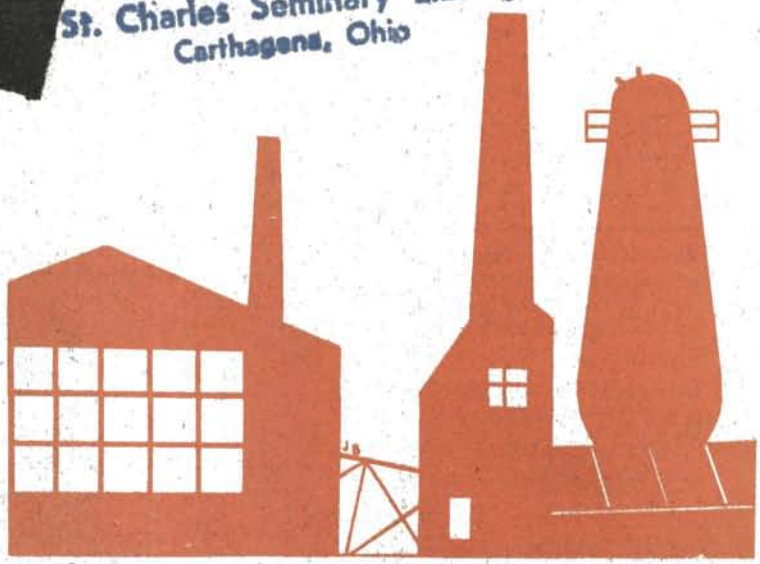

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Correspondence

Promise & peril

Roxboro, N.C.

To the Editors: The editorial, "Lament for Chernobyl" [May 23], is the most perceptive and humane comment on the disaster that I have seen. It strikes the needed balance between compassion, caution, and constructive suggestions for policy.

This spring I organized a course at Wake Forest on "The Promise and Perils of the Nuclear Age," in which I was joined by two physicists, two political scientists, and an anthropologist. The consensus of our discussions on the "peaceful" uses of nuclear power seemed to indicate that we are fortunate to have an indefinite "grace period" in which to address complex and unanswered questions before proceeding with further employment of this source of energy. It does appear that at some point in the future we (and other countries more than we) must turn to some use of nuclear power as the supply of fossil fuels runs out. At the same time, we must vigorously explore alternatives, including the question of what kind of civilization is desired, at what cost.

As for uses of nuclear weaponry, your editorial appropriately underscores the implications of Chernobyl for the destructiveness of nuclear war.

Incidently, many of the students found it hard to deal with what they perceived to be some ambiguities in the bishops' pastoral ["The Challenge of Peace"]. So some of us had to talk about Original Sin, "realism," and "maturity," and other palliatives for the young. I suppose Chernobyl could be viewed as "grace through tragedy," a theme not unknown in Christian faith.

JAMES ALFRED MARTIN, JR.

Reader, pass on

Heidelberg

To the Editors: In your editorial "Lament for Chernobyl" [May 23], you wrote: "How can anyone possibly trust the Soviets? They didn't warn anyone about the fallout, not their own people nor their allies. Is this Gorbachev's new straightforwardness? We should discuss arms control with such cold dissemblers? Nyet!"

When I read these lines, I was very unhappy; but when I read what followed, I found comfort. (REV.) ALFONS BEIL

Vatican roulette

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: David J. O'Brien experiences the church as a "vibrant and hopeful community within which to carry on the intellectual enterprise" ["The Summons to Responsibility," June 6]. Come on, David — what about Curran, Boff, Daly, Küng, and the others? Theologians and ethicists in today's church are in an intellectual game of Russian (or should I say Vatican!) Roulette. This is hopeful? Or vibrant?

Then O'Brien suggests that ecclesiastical authority and freedom of expression are no longer central issues for lay people. It must be ancient history that O'Brien teaches, not contemporary. As I write this letter I have a clipping from the *Boston Globe* [June 5, 1986] sitting on the desk in front of me. The headline reads: "Paulist Center Bows to Church's Threats: Liturgical practices challenged; Women out as preachers at Mass." O'Brien's classroom may well allow the "reinvigoration of public dialogue within the church" that he experiences, but local dioceses and parishes do not. He urges us not to "marginalize religion" in our lives. But how am I to "mainstream" my daughter in a church in which the ecclesiastical authorities tell her she will not be allowed access to roles of leadership or service on an equal basis?

The challenge to all of us — intellectuals included — is to find in the church those "free spaces" of public life in which we can live our faith. Harry Boyte and Sara Evans, in their recent book *Free Spaces* (Harper & Row), defines these as "environments in which people are able to learn a new self-respect, a deeper and more assertive group identity, public skills and values of cooperation and civic virtue. Put simply, free spaces are settings between private lives and large-scale institutions where ordinary citizens can act with dignity, independence, and vision." The challenge for all of us is to mourn the loss of any of these free spaces, to support those that still exist, and to build new "free spaces" where we can. Out of that process we may see the continuing birth of a more "vibrant and hopeful community."

DAVID W. GAGNE

Bush-league fallacy

Villanova, Pa.

To the Editors: There is much to admire in David J. O'Brien's summons of Catholic intellectuals to responsibility ["The Summons to Responsibility," June 6]. I disagree, however, with his description of faculty as sharing in "unaccountable professionalism." The 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure declares that academic freedom "carries with it duties correlative with rights." The formal and informal processes of peer review, as well as other procedures such as student reviews, provide us with a rather thoroughly accountable professoriate.

I also wonder if it is adequate or even appropriate to say that Catholic higher education "has failed to achieve excellence." To be sure there is more to be achieved, but the rapid improvements in Catholic higher education over the past three decades need to be celebrated and acclaimed. Isn't it time we stopped beating our breasts long enough to acknowl-

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Publisher: Edward S. Skillin

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THE CURRAN EFFECT

BY THIS TIME every Catholic in reach of a newspaper or television knows that the Vatican has declared Father Charles Curran no longer "suitable nor eligible to exercise the function of a professor of Catholic theology." The decision was not surprising. That does not make it any the less shocking.

Anyone who believes that the action against Curran pertains only to one troublesome priest is whistling past the graveyard. Within the past several months, what might be called the "Curran effect" could be seen operating in two other widely publicized cases. In one, the announcement that Father Michael J. Buckley, S.J., would be appointed theological advisor to the U.S. bishops' committee on doctrine was met with fierce attacks. Father Buckley's offense? Nine years ago he had signed a letter from the Jesuit School of Theology faculty at Berkeley questioning the Vatican's reasoning in the matter of women's ordination. In another case, Father James H. Provost, a former president of the Canon Law Society of America, was scheduled to lose his post at Catholic University after the Vatican expressed reservations about his application for tenure. Both men ultimately secured their appointments, largely because a number of U.S. bishops (including, it should be noted, some known for their conservative instincts) took a firm stand against what would have been serious injustices done to two loyal and distinguished scholars. The "victories" were won at a price, however. The appointments were both accompanied by ambiguous statements which seemed to deny the legitimacy of public theological disagreement with official church teaching. They were preceded by Archbishop James Hickey's abrupt, unilateral dismissal of the American bishops' own 1968 norms for public dissent as "unworkable." Interpreting Cardinal Ratzinger's position in the Curran case, Hickey declared that there is no right to public dissent by Catholic theologians. Here, then, is the key issue.

By comparison, a number of other popular arguments are only distractions. Father Curran's defenders, for instance, need not dramatize (and thereby banalize) the problem by loose and exaggerated references to the Holy Inquisition or freedom of conscience. On the other hand, Father Curran's critics are flat wrong when they propose innocently that Rome's position is no more than a concern for "truth in advertising": someone labeled "Catholic theologian" ought to be dispensing certified Catholic theology and not some substitute variety of his and her own creation. In fact, no one, not even Rome, has suggested that Father Curran slights or misrepresents the official hierarchical teaching or passes off his own in its place, either in the classroom or in his writings. Nor does he simply line up official teaching with his own alternatives and suggest that students or readers are free to "take their pick," as though whim or mere preference rather than serious theological reasons were the basis for decision. Equally misleading are:

(a) the belief that the Curran camp claims "anything goes" as long as a theologian

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is dealing with non-infallible teaching;

(b) the expressions of undifferentiated outrage from those basically (and sometimes rightly) appalled by today's sexual standards and ready to lay responsibility for them at the feet of any theologian who has ever dared deviate from Father Kelly's *Modern Youth and Chastity*;

(c) the commentaries that treat Catholic institutions as branch offices of the Vatican, and Catholic thinkers as sales representatives.

However polemically attractive, these arguments all swerve from the central issue: the legitimacy of public discussion of controverted theological questions. The Vatican's conservatives know that non-infallible teaching can change, indeed that even infallible teaching can be rethought. But they believe that the only way this process of change can be kept from turning into anarchy is to require that direct questioning of official doctrine be conducted *sotto voce*. At least, that is, when the children are listening — when the debate might escape the confines of the theological community and have reverberations among the faithful generally. *Sotto voce* can mean different things. If theologians could dispute in a sufficiently unknown language (Latin?), for instance, then debate might go boldly forward, behind closed doors as it were, until some indeterminate moment in the future when either the old views would be roundly affirmed or a revised consensus could spring full-grown from Rome — and the understanding or practice of the church be modified accordingly. That happy solution being no longer possible, it would be prudent for theologians to express themselves in extremely oblique or obscure terms. Or if that proves unduly penetrable, then perhaps discussion might restrict itself to hinting at weaknesses in the arguments buttressing current teachings without ever concluding that such weaknesses indicate a need for change in the teachings themselves. There is a stricter view yet, but one with considerable support: once the pope or Roman congregations have insisted on a teaching, theologians should do no more than circulate their doubts or objections privately. In all cases, what cannot be tolerated is the kind of open and clear discussion which might weaken the legitimacy of established positions before new ones can be constructed and tested in the wings.

It is easy, perhaps too easy, to dismiss the doctrine of *sotto voce*. It has two things going for it. First, it is familiar to many bishops, being essentially the practice of the pre-conciliar church in which they were trained. Second, it seems to respond realistically to the problem of maintaining church unity in a culture dominated by mass media. Obviously the understanding of the Gospel which the church hands on from past generations cannot be reformulated lightly. Yet the media readily inflates whatever is new or singular in theological discussion, often stirring premature enthusiasms rather than the sober and severe testing which should greet whatever proposes to be fuller and truer recastings of the truth the church must safeguard.

But the realism of a *sotto voce* theology is spurious. Conservatives should be as aware of the reasons as liberals:

● *Sin*. The restriction of open theological discussion seriously underestimates the problem of the church's own failings, its hardness of heart in both hearing and living the Gospel. The church's history is marred by teachings that were denials of Christ's redemptive revelation, not embodiments of it. Why believe that this history is entirely behind us?

● *Scandal*. For all the Catholics distressed and confused by the coexistence of contending views in the church, there are as many or more who are dismayed and repelled by a church that would appear fearful of truth, hostile to inquiry, guarded against experience, suspicious of imagination.

● *Abdication*. Perplexing and pressing problems of faith and morals are going to be posed, like it or not. Catholic teachings will be debated, by Catholics and non-Catholics alike, at both the popular and scholarly levels. Narrow restrictions on Catholic theological discussion will only assure that

SUMMER BREAKDOWN

ON BEING TAKEN FOR A RIDE

THIS SUMMER proved a universal point: the only thing more trying than a vacation is a vacation with your car.

Besides the awesome responsibility of navigating strange lands and finding disguised places like airports and interstate highways, I hate worring about whether my car will make it.

When I absolutely have to make a trip, I take the Subaru to Art at B&L Gulf. "Fill her up, Art," I say, "and you better give her the usual once-over."

"Going out of town?" Art asks. Art knows my psyche better than most anyone. I'm the kind of guy for whom those Delco radiator belt ads were invented: "You never know when your belt will wear out — and where you'll be when it does." (Cut to forlorn pilgrim trekking through the Sahara Desert.)

Many times I've called Art with trouble. He gets my car, assures me, and starts to work. An hour or so later he's fixed it.

"What's the damage, Art?"

"Two thirty-eight."

"Two hundred and thirty-eight dollars? Wow! What was wrong?"

"No, two dollars and thirty-eight cents. A little rubber ring on the piston was worn out. I tried to get you a used one but couldn't match it, so we had to buy you a new one."

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this examination take place under non-Catholic auspices. The church will become dependent on others for the dynamic element in its thinking, while its own criteria for responsible theological exploration will have lost all influence.

● *Isolation*. A sharp differentiation between the habits of Catholic theology and the commitment of the scholarly community to testing ideas by open discussion will isolate the church's theological efforts from the rest of the university and from intellectual life generally.

● *Escalation*. The enforcement of a *sotto voce* discipline in theology cannot easily stop with a few dramatic actions against scholars in pontifical faculties. The logic, once accepted, will be contagious; consistency will be demanded — for all Catholic institutions; for all individuals directly working for the church; perhaps for all identifiable Catholics (at which point, for want of institutional leverage, the resort to public denunciation or threats of excommunication becomes necessary). Energy will be channeled toward building the skills and tools needed to assure ideological conformity. The rule of *sotto voce* is advocated by some churchmen who consider themselves faithful to the vision of Vatican II. They will find the conciliar vision swiftly eroded by the kind of dynamism that fed the anti-Modernist excesses.

● *Hypocrisy*. Almost by definition, conducting theological discussion *sotto voce* requires speaking in two tongues, the public one of certainty and affirmation, the quiet one of complexity, question, and doubt. Dissimulation, on the part of both theologians and bishops, becomes second nature. Already, the inability to address candidly the deep crisis in moral teachings on sexual issues has resulted in an occupational schizophrenia among church leaders. A condescending (and unexplicated) concept of "pastoral" practice serves as a fig leaf: "Rome wants flexible confessors," goes the phrase, "not flexible theologians." It is mainly getting flexible believers. The situation can only worsen if the clamps are tightened.

● *Exclusion*. Theological exploration conducted *sotto voce* is necessarily closed to outsiders. The experience of lay people in the world can only get filtered through the categories used by those who know the rules of the game, and whose observance of theological etiquette has not disqualified them from serious consideration. The prospect of a Synod on the Laity

"Jeez, Art," I stammer, with tears of gratitude in my eyes, "what would I do without you guys?"

"We're just your local, small-town service station."

For this kind of service, Art should be canonized. He's already the Patron Saint of my Subaru, the Guru of Go-Go.

Our vacation this year was at Martha's Vineyard. I steeled myself for the ordeal, but for the first few days the Kind Gods seemed to be smiling. On the fifth day, just as I was beginning to worry in earnest about the return trip (making the ferry, negotiating the drive, finding Route 128 when Route 95 veers off, coddling the radiator belt), the Ironical Gods sneered.

"It won't turn over," I yelled, deleting adjectives, in a certain whining tone I use when inanimate objects conspire against me. "I better call Art."

"Call Art from Martha's Vineyard at suppertime?" asked my wife gently, the way you'd ask a guy if he really wants to jump off the World Trade Center.

"I don't expect him to make house calls to Martha's Vineyard," I replied, more-or-less calmly, "but he might be able to explain the parameters of the disaster. Then I'll know what to say to the local felons who pose as mechanics. Otherwise they'll rebuild my engine with silly putty and bandaids and charge me six hundred bucks."

"Oh, don't be silly. Get the cables, jump start the car, and take it to the garage. It's probably the battery," my wife said, opening the trunk. "Where do you keep the jumper cables?"

"Right where I can find them — hanging in the utility closet at home."

I cursed for a couple of hours while my wife located somebody with jumper cables and the kindness to jump start our car. As I pulled into Vineyard Auto Repair and Loans, full of fear and trembling, I invoked Art prayerfully.

"She won't start," I comment to a grimy mechanic.

"Hey, fella, we'll do the diagnosis," he snarls. "Didya make an appointment or what?"

"Jeez, no, I kind of hoped you might be able to help me. We're sort of stranded without a car and no way to get to the beach."

"Save the sob story, Mac. Ten thousand people on this island and everybody's got a story. We'll try to get to it tomorrow or the next day."

"Oh, thank you so much." Fortunately I had brought along some dirt to grovel in. "It sure would be great if you could squeeze it in tomorrow."

Hitch-hiking back to the beach house, a little light bulb went on in my head. Next summer, instead of taking my family and a baby-sitter to the beach, I'll take my family and Art. I'm sure we could come to terms for his time that week. He'd probably appreciate a week on the beach, and I'd certainly appreciate peace of mind.

Two days later, after hitch-hiking back to Vineyard Auto Repairs and Loans, I encounter the boss, who is smirking. "Well," I ask, "what's the damage?"

"Two-thirty-eight."

"Gosh, that's great!" I exclaim. "What was it, a little rubber ring or something?"

"Nah, we had to replace the starter. Had to ship it from the mainland. You're getting off easy for only two hundred and thirty-eight bucks."

ROBERT H. BELL

(Robert H. Bell teaches English at Williams College, and airs his humor on National Public Radio.)

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under such conditions is a sorry spectacle.

In the end, the move to exclude the possibility of responsible, public theological questioning of established but non-infallible church teaching will provoke the very fragmentation and loss of authority it is meant to prevent. The alternative is to find a way of maintaining the church's identity and proclaiming a truth not in the tow of cultural fashion, while simultaneously recognizing that fidelity to this truth itself requires constant and courageous self-questioning. It is a path neither clearly mapped nor smoothly paved. But of the tempting authoritarian road again beckoning the church, both our conservative and our liberal instincts tell us this: it is a dead end.

MIRACLE OR ILLUSION

What one act has made the bond market euphoric, the president and Congress self-congratulatory, entrepreneurs self-pitying, universities and charities threatened, the real estate industry vengeful, lobbyists exhausted, and the citizenry confused? The present tax bill, of course. Often dubbed a "reform," it has also been called both a "miracle" and an "illusion." Which is it? The answer still depends upon whose taxes are in question.

Already, however, almost imperceptibly, the nation as a whole has suffered a loss. The notion of progressive taxation — that those most able to pay should pay at higher rates — has slipped from the national consciousness. This has been accomplished in two ways, whether by design or not: first, through a preoccupation with simplicity in the tax revision process; second, through a willingness to throw out principle in favor of pragmatism in the battle for fairness.

At first, simplicity seemed a worthwhile goal. It promised a new efficiency in the offices of the IRS. It brought to mind visions of a one-page, E-Z tax form to be filed speedily by all. Simplicity, however, came to function as a smokescreen obscuring what might have become a clear and fully-blown public discussion of the merits or demerits of progressivity vs. the flat tax. Meanwhile, a path toward the flat tax was quietly engineered by both parties in Congress.

Now the public is being told that simplicity has in fact been achieved: after all, are not two tax brackets significantly simpler than fifteen? Not really. At least, not for the taxpayer who merely has to turn to the correct line on the correct table to find the tax owed no matter how many brackets there are. No mind-boggler then or now. Only for a minority within a minority of taxpayers — those who will have enough new incentives to forego itemizing deductions — is the new bill significantly simpler.

The rhetoric of simplicity causes us to wonder why there was no real push for the ultimate in flat taxation — one bracket — surely, by its own logic, the simplest scheme of all? Such a move might, happily, have alarmed the public to the slippery slide away from its former ideal of progressivity. It might have revived the debate about what is a proper philosophy on which to build national tax policy. As it is, direction and any consensus informing it are lacking. For a bowl of porridge now — a little cut for nearly everyone — progressivity has become the first casualty of tax "reform."

As for fairness, Congress managed to reduce, not eliminate, the loopholes, write-offs, and shelters whose creation and exploitation had become a lucrative and ingenious industry by which too many rich individuals and corporations weaseled out of paying their fair share of taxes, and sometimes, any share at all. For the tenacity to resist the pressures of special interest lobbyists, thereby restoring to government a measure of credibility, Congress deserves a cheer, but not nearly the amount of ticker tape it has been showering upon itself.

Look at the record in context: the top income group has had its tax rate slashed from 70 percent in 1981 to 28 percent with the new bill. During the same period the lowest income group has had its meager income subject to increasing rates of taxation; with the new bill, this group — some six million people — will finally experience a redress of their burden by being dropped from the tax rolls altogether. This merely returns them to their pre-1978 nontaxable status. A windfall for the top group and a redress of grievances for the bottom do not quite balance on the scales of justice.

What about the new shift of the tax burden from individuals to corporations? And how will the middle class fare in such a changed economic climate?

For weeks the financial pages have been full of predictions about what may happen to the nation's economy as a result of the corporate tax shift, particularly via the repeal of the Investment Tax Credit (ITC), a cherished government subsidy to business, although its benefits were recently challenged in an article in *Business Week*. Predictions vary from the loss of jobs in certain capital intensive industries, to increased efficiency developing over time in others, to a tax break for some corporations, such as retailers, that have been subject to the maximum corporate rate. And two theories have emerged about who will bear the brunt of the "passed on" cost of the new corporate taxes: that stockholders will, in effect, be twice-taxed (paying tax as individuals and as corporate investors), and/or that consumers will pay the tax in the form of higher prices for goods and services. Boosting corporate taxes has been the populist-sounding trade-off for the cuts in upper-income tax rates. But this distributional "deal" will be effectively nullified if the great mass of lower- and middle-income wage earners simply end up paying the corporate check at the supermarket or department-store cash register.

The further danger, given all the unknowns in a tax shuffle of this magnitude, is that too many immediately-felt ill effects will be lobbied into "corporate exceptions" during next year's review process — the Technical Corrections Act — unraveling this year's bill. If that were to occur, the failure to allow an appropriate period of time to pass for prudent corporate adjustments or for governmental evaluations to be made, could well result in dumping parts of the corporate burden back on the individual taxpayer, with most of the fallout hitting the middle- or lower-income groups. Time will tell. For now, the list of variables is long enough to warrant caution if not outright skepticism about the new bill. One cheer. At most.

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Of several minds: *Abigail McCarthy*

AS THE SYNOD NEARS—II

THE MANY HEADS OF CLERICALISM

IN AUGUST the bishops of the United States received from their committee on the laity and its secretariat a working paper, "Suggestions for Consulting with the Laity." The paper is intended to help prepare for the international synod on the mission of the laity, scheduled for Fall, 1987 in Rome.

This September the Chicago-based National Center for the Laity (an independent entity) convenes its own Consultation on the Vocation of the Laity in the World. The intent of the meeting is to contribute to the synod's agenda by sharing its insights with delegates to the synod, with the American bishops, and with the American Catholic community in general.

Both the circulation of the preparatory paper by the official body and gathering of the volunteers can be seen as acts of faith and hope on the part of American Catholics. There is a determination to take seriously the pope's adjuration to the Pontifical Council on the Laity that in preparing for the synod "encouragement must be given to a widespread participation of the laity and of their movements and associations." The truth may be, however, that the time is too short for truly widespread and inclusive consultation, and that the mechanics of consultation have not been extensively developed in Rome.

Trepidation has been voiced by some of those invited to comment on the synod in the lay secretariat's publication, *Gifts*. Russell Shaw, Secretary for Public Affairs at the National Council of Catholic Bishops and its Catholic Conference got to the heart of the matter when be wrote (Fall, 1984):

> There's a good chance that the synod will either mark the beginning of the end of clericalism . . . or confirm its ascendancy for years to come . . . . Clericalism is an attitude, a mindset, a way of thinking about things, as prevalent among lay people as it is among priests and religious . . . Clericalism shortchanges the church by assigning lay people a second-class, derivative role . . . the laity are passive recipients rather than active agents. . . .

He concluded, "if clericalism is the controlling view behind the synod's consideration of 'the mission of the laity,' the synod, with the best intentions, may do more harm than good."

The *Lineamenta*, or outlines first received from Rome and meant as a point of departure for the synod, evidently confirmed this fear. According to Virginia Sullivan Finn, assistant to the dean at Weston School of Theology, the *Lineamenta* stress neither collaborative frameworks nor the common foundation of all ministry, but rather the "separation and distinction between priest and people," and "problems evoked by lay participation" (*Gifts*, Winter 1986). "The *Lineamenta*," she says, "present a vision of a vibrant mission in the secular world animated by lay men and women *without dealing seriously with how that is to come about.*"

If persons who might be called lay professionals within the church have such concerns, what are the legitimate concerns of those who think of themselves as church-in-the-world, whose mission is accomplished in their own fields of work? In 1982 Russell Barta, sociologist and founding member of the Center for the Laity, spoke for many lay persons when he told the members of a symposium on the laity (sponsored by a lay organization):

> It is one of the failures of the post-Vatican II church that this second message — that the laity are church-in-the-world — is not getting through. There is no flourishing set of pastoral strategies to get this message across and to help Catholics work at the difficult task of integrating their work in the world with religious insight. . . . Where and how often are the careers of the laity celebrated as forms of Christian service in the world? More often than not the laity in their capacity as workers/professionals are not ministered to. They are frequently lobbied, told what they are doing wrong, but who ministers to them?

Since that time the American Bishops' Committee on the Laity would seem to have heard that protest. They and the staff of their secretariat have held consultations on "lay spirituality" and on "Work and Faith in Society: Catholic Perspectives." During the latter consultation especially, bishops and staff listened to representatives of those who, in the words of director Dolores R. Leckey, bear significant responsibility in the various professional and public spheres of life.

Yet in 1986 David J. O'Brien, historian at Holy Cross College, speaking for the Catholic intellectual, could still write

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in *Commonweal*, last June 6:

> In their working lives, the laity find themselves less beyond or outside the church than simply detached from it. This detachment results no more from their ignoring the church than from the church ignoring them. Until church leaders learn — or care to learn — to affirm the secular lives of the laity, until they take seriously the idea . . . that the lay person in the world is there as church, as much church as the deacon or lay minister working within the community itself, the church will not assist the political culture to face matters of war, abortion, and injustice, nor contribute anything more to the nation than resounding "no's."

The key word is *seriousness*. Virginia Finn sees a lack of seriousness in the pontifical committee's failure to go beyond rhetoric. O'Brien sees it in the failure to recognize that the lay person *is* church, not simply a messenger from church to the world. Other aspects of the difficulty can easily be gleaned by listening to those who have participated in discussions on the vocation of the laity in recent years.

These laymen and women see a lack of respect for the knowledge and expertise they possess from their education and the experience of their callings. Councilman John Erb of Rochester, New York, wrote in *Initiatives*, March-April 1984:

> As a Catholic involved in electoral politics, I, personally, have found little or no understanding among church leadership of the moral dilemmas faced by those in politics and government. I am not speaking here about moral values such as honesty, but of the more complicated decision that may involve a choice between several goods. There is really no understanding of political complexities on the part of church leadership.

In the 1982 symposium mentioned earlier, lawyer-professor (and now federal judge) John Noonan expressed the frustration he felt when two different archbishops rejected a plan advanced by him and some of his academic colleagues — a plan which would have enhanced the influence of the church in secular higher education — because of these archbishops' complete lack of knowledge of higher education. To one, he says, it was a mystery. To the other it was "beyond his grasp." Neither was inclined to accept advice from people actually involved (and with distinction) in secular higher education, devoted Catholics though they might be. How, asks Noonan, can you communicate with church leaders who lack a given professional experience when there is a new proposal to be made, a new venture to be tried "so that they can conscientiously respond?" It is a question, evidently, still awaiting an answer.

Even worse than the lack of respect for professional information is what seems to be the preference for the outsider and the amateur as model of social action. This preference was pointed out by the Chicago "Declaration of Christian Concern" which noted "a depreciation" of the ordinary social roles through which the laity serve and act upon the world. The activist, for example, who buys a few shares of stock so that he or she can confront the corporate board is thought to be more "church" than is the corporate executive who struggles to integrate his or her religion and calling.

Nor does the increase in lay ministers and lay professionals help the situation. It may worsen it. Dr. David Byers has remarked that when he was with the office of Domestic Social Development at the Bishops Conference he was often bothered by the "almost unconscious contempt" demonstrated by lay professionals in the peace and justice ministry for the non-church-professional laity, particularly those in the business community (cf. *The Catholic Laity Today*, 1982). The attitude, he said, was clerical.

All these *caveats* would make it seem that there is too much for the synod to do, too much to undo, too much change to effect and absorb — and yet the synod can make a beginning. We can take courage from the secretariat which anticipated with its own questionnaire one from Rome (which will no doubt be impractically late) and thus set consultation going. We can also take courage from the participants in the lay consultations who took the initiative in offering their reflections and insights to the synod. Recalling the faltering start of Vatican II and its heartening results, we dare to hope that the synod will yet mark the beginning of the end of clericalism and the affirmation of the lay vocation.

ABIGAIL McCARTHY

Of several minds: *David R. Carlin, Jr.*

LEVIATHAN AT LARGE

THE COURT & THE RIGHT OF PRIVACY

IT IS unlikely, despite recent alarmist prophecies to the contrary, that the U.S. Supreme Court decision in late June upholding a Georgia anti-sodomy statute will lead to an anti-gay crusade in America. To judge from the somewhat hysterical reaction that followed, you'd think the court had declared that anti-sodomy legislation is a good thing. It didn't. It simply said that it is not an unconstitutional thing. In the last twenty-five years half the states have repealed their anti-sodomy laws, and there is no reason to believe this process of decriminalization — which is little more than removing dead letters from the statute books — will not continue. And well it should, since no useful social purpose is served nowadays by making such conduct between consenting adults a criminal offense.

The real long-term importance of the Georgia decision lies in its revision — I almost said its repeal — of the court's longstanding doctrine of privacy. In *Griswold* (1965), which declared uncon-

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stitutional laws banning the sale and use of contraceptives, Justice Douglas, writing for the majority, discovered the right of privacy in the "penumbra" of the U.S. Constitution. In *Roe v. Wade* (1973) this right was extended to cover abortion.

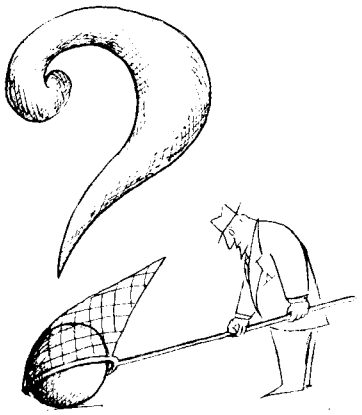
My legal education being imperfect, I had long been curious as to where this penumbra might be located. But after years of experimentation I discovered that if I hold my copy of the Constitution up to a certain slant of light on winter afternoons I can detect a slight penumbra on the floor, where the shadow falls. To date, however, despite the help of a magnifying glass, I have been unable to discern any text within this penumbra, let alone a text referring to privacy. Justice Douglas must have had extraordinary eyesight.

It's not that I doubt the value of privacy. Far from it. Few things are more valuable. But I have a sufficient prejudice in favor of the old-fashioned notion that the people and their legislatures ought to be the principal sources of law. So I get nervous when judges construe the Constitution not just liberally (that's OK) but with the aid of a light that never was on sea or land.

Nonetheless, on the principle that you shouldn't kick either a man or a doctrine when he/it is down, let me say a word or two on behalf of this now faltering doctrine of privacy.

One of the safest political generalizations made about the last few centuries is that there has been a world-wide drift in the direction of omnicompetent government. Totalitarian regimes, especially those in China and Russia, represent a kind of logical development of Rousseau's *Social Contract* theory, which holds that the individual renounces, in the act of becoming a member of society, all natural rights and liberties, exchanging them instead for the freedom of the citizen, something that is realized to the degree the individual can bring his or her own will into accord with society's general will. Modern liberal democracies give Rousseau a more benign exegesis, but they, too, drift in the direction of omnicompetence.

This is not simply a matter of theoretical evolution. Nearly every practical development for the past few centuries in certain key fields — industry, banking, science, medicine, communications — has increased government's capacity for doing things. The central government of the fully modernized state is perhaps the most extraordinary instrument ever invented for ameliorating the human condition. Little wonder that generations of world-betterers have tried to get their hands on it and to strengthen it still further.



But the United States stands in a different theoretical tradition from the one terminating in Lenin and Mao. Not Bodin and Rousseau but Coke and Locke are the fathers of our political church. There is something not fully modern, something just a bit medieval in fact, about the American constitutional tradition. Not even as a matter of abstract principle is the state all-powerful. Instead, individuals and even corporations have rights and liberties that the state is constitutionally incapable of interfering with.

Yet the practical factors contributing to the growth of the omnicompetent state are just as present in the United States as elsewhere. Here, too, it is demanded that the central government use the vast powers potentially available to it to improve the lives of its citizens. Thus a government originally conceived to have very limited federal powers has grown over a period of 200 years to the point where it holds chief responsibility for the prosperity, health, safety, and general well-being of its citizens.

Now, the more the competence of government expands in the U.S., the more necessary it becomes — if we are to preserve our tradition of limited government and inviolable rights — to delineate those rights with every greater specificity. It even becomes necessary, as a kind of compensatory move for the expansion of government, to expand those rights. As the no man's land between state and individual gradually disappears, we find ourselves bargaining informally: we will permit government to enlarge its sphere of action if it permits us to enlarge our smaller spheres of immunity.

This compensatory elaboration of individual rights has occurred chiefly under two heads — privacy and due process. In certain activities (abortion and contraception, for instance) the law simply cannot touch us. In others, the law may be able to touch us, but only after having observed the protocols of an elaborate procedural code. Thus we have managed to go to bed with the Leviathan without being crushed.

At first glance it may seem a bit illogical that American liberals, who have been big government's most important supporters in the U.S., have also been the firmest backers of restrictions on government power by means of due process and privacy rights. But granting the principle of compensation just mentioned, there is nothing illogical about this. For unless one is prepared to scrap the traditional American notion of freedom — that is, the more or less Lockean concept of freedom — one has little choice but to balance every push for the expansion of government by an opposing push for the expansion of individual rights to privacy and due process.

There may be those who join me in rejoicing that a blow has been struck against the theoretically dubious doctrine of privacy. But we should keep in mind that in the course of human history, questionable theories have more than once served morally and politically valuable purposes. If the conventional doctrine of privacy is false, by all means let's get rid of it. But if this doctrine, though false, has helped to keep us free in a world in which freedom is a relatively scarce commodity, then we had better hurry and find a true doctrine of privacy to replace the exploded one.

DAVID R. CARLIN, JR.

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The faces of global competition

LANCE COMPA

"IT'S A GLOBAL economy and we've got to be competitive." That is what U.S. industrialists say as they shut down thousands of stateside factory jobs and ship them overseas to runaway shops in search of cheaper labor. For those workers and their unions left at home, management's demand to compete against foreign workers means cuts in wages, benefits, and working conditions under the threat of further job loss.

Many unions and members of Congress from areas hit hard by imports and plant closings respond with calls to restrict foreign products entering the U.S. market. Immediately the debate is joined. Depending on where one sits, it's either the clumsy protectionists against the principled free traders, or realistic "fair trade" advocates versus Social Darwinist free-marketeers.

Most unions are seen as protectionist, and the label is often justified. "Stop Imports" and "Buy American" have been the main themes of many union campaigns. These sentiments stir the blood, but they are devoid of political content. They define the enemy as foreign products and, by implication, foreign workers willing to work cheaply. As long as workers abroad are seen as part of the problem, however, the American labor movement cannot solve either its trade problem or its collective bargaining crisis. Protectionism accepts the employers' premise that U.S. workers are locked in competition with third-world pay levels — a contest Americans can never win.

American workers are not served by investing their human and political capital in marches against imports, foreign car-smashings at Labor Day rallies, lobbying for protectionist legislation, and the like. Such approaches ignore the role of U.S. multinational corporations, U.S. military support for right-wing regimes that provide havens for runaway shops, and the legitimate aspirations of workers in other countries.

To alter the public perception of labor as diehard protectionist, a new alliance of U.S. unions, churches, human rights groups, and supporters in Congress is shifting the focus of the trade debate to where it belongs: on ways of sustaining an open trading system in which workers, as much as employers and consumers, have a stake. In the past year this coalition has moved the issue of international labor rights to the top of the trade agenda, provoking an outraged response from Reagan administration policymakers.

The labor rights alliance is out to make violations of basic labor rights an unfair *trade* practice under U.S. law, in the same way that illegal subsidies and "dumping" — selling products in the U.S. market below their true cost of production in order to drive out competition — are unfair practices. This "social dumping," as it has been called, of goods made by workers unable to defend themselves against abusive working conditions, could be remedied by trade countermeasures here to restrict the entry of such goods. Better yet, a move to make labor rights abuses a trade law violation could force governments that engage in such abuses to end their labor repression if they want to reach the American market.

In 1985 the alliance won a labor rights provision in two important trade statutes, one governing the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), and the other authorizing funds for the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC). GSP benefits permit eligible third-world countries to export their products to the United States with reduced or eliminated tariffs. OPIC guarantees federal insurance protection for the overseas assets of U.S. corporations. With the changes in the law, GSP benefits and OPIC insurance protection can be denied to companies producing in countries that systematically violate labor rights.

The OPIC provision removes a small but important incentive for U.S. companies to shift operations overseas. In the wake of nationalizations of American businesses by Cuba and other revolutionary governments in the 1960s, Congress created OPIC to insure U.S. investments against such losses due to political turmoil. When the socialist administration of Salvador Allende expropriated the Chilean properties of U.S. copper companies in 1971, for example (with unanimous

LANCE COMPA *works in Washington, D.C. for the United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers of America (UE).*

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support from all Chilean parties, left to right, it should be noted), OPIC made up the companies' claimed losses from what they called "inadequate" compensation by the Chilean government. Under the new law, though, such insurance could be denied to investors in Pinochet's Chile, South Korea, Guatemala, Taiwan, and other countries where labor rights are routinely suppressed. Companies will have to think twice about shutting down a particular U.S. operation to move there.

Instead of targeting "cheap labor" itself, labor rights proponents are taking aim at the conditions that create cheap labor markets. In fact labor costs abroad are not lower simply because a country is less developed. Some U.S.-backed governments for example, deliberately crush trade union organizing and bargaining efforts which might raise wages and improve working conditions. The prospect of a "union-free environment" which results from such oppression becomes a powerful lure to U.S. corporations looking for offshore production sites.

Labor rights provisions are key elements in other trade bills now being considered by Congress. Labor Secretary William E. Brock has called labor rights language "a turkey . . . a thinly disguised scheme to keep goods from certain countries out of the U.S. market." Writing in *Business Week* [June 23, 1986], economist Allan S. Blinder terms it "a clinker . . . setting us up as the moral arbiter of world labor relations."

One might well ask Brock and Blinder about the moral dimensions of the jailing, torture, and murder of workers for union activities. *That* is what is involved in the labor rights debate, not whether labor rights laws would cause distortions in the free traders' treasured market system.

UNIONS involved in the labor rights movement recognize that different countries are at different levels of development, and that the products from such countries should not be excluded from the U.S. solely on that basis. But *no* company should gain a competitive advantage in world trade because it operates in a country where authorities kill and jail workers who try to form unions. The same injustice exists where regimes ban strikes, cripple collective bargaining, dissolve "undesirable" unions, or depose union leaders for their political views. And yet, in the name of free trade, American workers must compete with copper from Chile, steel and autos from South Korea, textiles from Turkey, garments from Thailand, coal from South Africa, printed circuit boards from Guatemala and El Salvador, appliances from Taiwan, and other products from various countries that systematically violate workers' rights.

The 1985 labor rights clause in U.S. trade legislation cites five internationally-recognized standards. They govern (1) freedom of association, (2) the right to organize and bargain collectively, (3) forced labor, (4) child labor, and (5) acceptable working conditions with respect to pay, hours, and occupational safety and health. This last does not mean a U.S. minimum wage or the imposition of OSHA standards on the rest of the world, as critics wildly charge. Each element is grounded and defined in international law to allow for different levels of development and different social and political systems, setting out basic rights that should be protected everywhere. But here's what is happening in the real world that free traders fail to see:

THE PRICE of copper on world markets, say industry analysts, has plummeted since the late 1970s, in large measure because of the flat-out production by rich Chilean mines. But when Chilean copper miners tried to organize an outdoor Mass and demonstration for wage increases at the big Chuquicamata mine earlier this year, the Pinochet regime massed thousands of troops in combat gear to block the rally.

In the meantime, depressed copper prices led U.S. copper companies to demand huge concessions from their unions in the Southwest and Rocky Mountain states. The unions agreed to substantial pay and benefit cuts in 1983, but the biggest company, Phelps-Dodge, was not satisfied. Refusing to accept the industry-wide pattern agreed to by other producers, the company provoked a strike by its 3,000 union members. With the intervention of the Arizona National Guard, the company hired strikebreakers, resumed operations, and forced a union decertification vote that eliminated the unions from its mines.

In July, union members at Kennecott, ASARCO, and other U.S. copper companies — still faced with competition from Chile's low-priced ore produced under conditions of the dictatorship — agreed to new contracts calling for pay cuts of up to 20 percent.

● In Chile, the president of the public employees' union was abducted, tortured, shot in the head and decapitated in 1982, one week after a press conference at which he declared opposition to the economic policies of the Pinochet dictatorship. Last year, three leaders of the National Association of Teachers were kidnapped and murdered by having their throats cut. Military government vehicles were used in their kidnapping.

Thousands of other union organizers have been killed, imprisoned, or exiled by the Pinochet regime for labor activities. Unions in the Santiago region must obtain police permission to hold a meeting. Strike votes must be taken by open ballot in the presence of police, marking strike supporters for retaliation. Strikes can last only sixty days. If no settlement is reached, workers must accept the employer's final offer or abandon their jobs. Unions can be organized only in the single workplace; coordinated or industry-wide bargaining is outlawed under the Pinochet labor code. Yet in the last three years, Chile has received $6 million in U.S. economic and military aid, and nearly $1.5 billion in loans and grants approved by U.S. agencies. In 1985 alone, OPIC insured over $150 million in U.S. investments in Chile.

● In South Korea, twelve union organizers were arrested in July and charged with subversion for forming an independent labor federation in the capital city of Seoul. Eighteen other

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MOVING labor rights to the center of the trade debate won't be easy. "But we can do it," says Congressman Don Pease (D-Ohio), the chief sponsor of labor rights provisions in trade legislation. Free traders on one side, and hard-line protectionists on the other, see "products, not people," as the main element of international trade, adds Pease. "One side wants products going anywhere and everywhere, regardless of conditions where they are produced; the other wants all products stopped at the border. We're trying to shift the debate, putting people back into the trade equation in a way that will give workers confidence in an open trading system."

Pease and several other members of Congress, along with many union, church, and human rights groups, are moving to create a permanent research and education fund to back up their labor rights campaign. John Cavanagh, a fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies who has coordinated an informal labor rights "working group," says the new, fully-staffed International Labor Rights Education and Research Fund will monitor, and, where necessary, push enforcement of existing labor rights laws governing trade benefits under the General System of Preferences and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, as well as any further legislation that might be enacted. He thinks the fund will relate labor rights research to the full range of U.S. trade, investment, taxation, finance, and foreign aid policies, and share information and activities with counterparts in foreign countries.

Amy R. Newell, national Secretary-Treasurer of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America says, that "Most people think union members are one-dimensional when it comes to trade: 'Buy American,' and let it go at that. But there's a moral dimension that our members are sensitive to. They are genuinely concerned about labor rights abroad. They don't begrudge foreign workers their jobs or an opportunity to send products here. After all, that door swings both ways. Thousands of our own members produce for export, like General Electric locomotives and Allen-Bradley industrial controls. The point is, *all* workers should be able to organize and bargain without facing death or prison for their union work."

Last month, a letter was sent to U.S. senators urging labor rights language in a Senate trade bill by five former secretaries of labor, national leaders of Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish organizations, directors of the NAACP and the Urban League, and several national union presidents, including Owen Bieber of the United Auto Workers and Lynn Williams of the United Steel Workers.

union leaders had been arrested in May for the same activity. All are still in custody, and Amnesty International reports they are suffering continued torture. They face the death penalty if found guilty.

- In Guatemala, twenty-five top leaders of the national labor federation were hauled away by police in 1981. They were attending a meeting to plan the funeral of a murdered comrade. The twenty-five have not been seen or heard from since. Local union leaders and other political activists are routinely kidnapped and killed by the notorious "secret anti-Communist army." In the last three years, Guatemala has received over $150 million in direct U.S. economic and military aid, as well as nearly $500 million in U.S.-approved loans and grants.
- In Taiwan, the right to strike is barred under penalty of death. Minimum wage, hour, and child labor laws exclude from coverage nearly half the entire workforce who toil in firms of less than thirty employees. The Chaing dictatorship appoints and controls official labor leadership.
- In South Africa, Amon Msana, a union leader who toured the United States earlier this year to meet American unionists, was immediately arrested and imprisoned on his return to South Africa. Hundreds of other union leaders have been detained, and many are unaccounted for, in the apartheid regime's "state of emergency." Thousands more have been jailed, killed, or driven into exile over the years for their labor activity, including both black and white activists organizing black workers.
- In El Salvador, the children of a telephone workers' union leader were kidnapped and tortured earlier this year because of their father's union activity. When the union struck in protest, military troops occupied the work sites to enforce the firing of the entire union leadership. Over the past three years, El Salvador has received almost $1.5 billion in direct economic and military aid from the U.S.
- In Thailand, thousands of children between the ages of ten and fourteen labor fifteen hours a day, seven days a week in garment factories. Their parents must pay fees to employers to secure such jobs for the children.

CYNICS in the Reagan administration and elsewhere continue to blast the labor rights legislation as "back-door protectionism" which attempts to impose U.S. standards on the rest of the world. They may be onto something. After all, a country where thousands of workers are fired every year for trying to organize a union, and where the full power of the government was brought to destroy a union of air traffic controllers, is ill-positioned to lecture others. But the kinds of abuses by some of our trading partners against which American workers are forced to compete, cry out for correction, regardless of free trade or fair trade ideologies.

Union leaders in this country involved in spreading the word about labor rights proposals to their rank and file members report a genuine enthusiasm: not for the prospect of shutting out foreign products, but for the hope of better pay and working conditions for their foreign counterparts. Of course there is self-interest, too. Higher pay and standards abroad will relieve pressure to undercut American standards in the name of competition. Still, there is an impulse toward solidarity among American workers that can emerge, even in hard times. When

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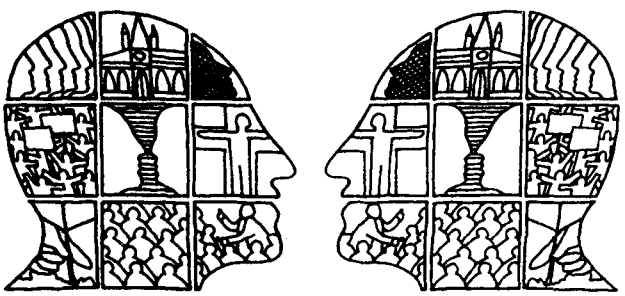
tapped, as in the growing campaign for international labor rights, such a sentiment can lead to new bonds with workers abroad.

With a program of international labor solidarity, unions that represent workers of multinational corporations in different countries can coordinate bargaining, strike support, information exchange, and other activities with one another. Where firms are foreign-based and governments suppress labor, U.S. unions can use labor rights laws to challenge our own government to make foreign aid and trading rights contingent on those countries' recognition of organizing and bargaining rights for their workers.

Only a massive effort at worker-to-worker contact and union-to-union cooperation can overcome the pressures in a capitalist trading system that push workers toward cutthroat competition with one another. United behind an international labor rights program, working people can press their governments for full employment policies, controls on multinational corporations, expanded trade union rights, protection against plant shutdowns and runaway shops, and other steps to improve working and living conditions around the world. Isolated in protectionist huddles, American workers can accomplish none of those goals. The cynics might be surprised at the solidarity that could result were U.S. unions able to fashion a common trade union program with the genuine, unfettered labor movements of our foreign trading partners.

FIDELITY, FAIRNESS, & THEOLOGICAL RESPONSIBILITY



On dissent in the church

CHARLES E. CURRAN

Serious theological positions are not very adequately conveyed in wire-service news reports or live TV interviews. Yet that is the way many people have formed their opinions on the Curran controversy. Last May, before the final decision by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Father Curran examined his case in an address to the College Theology Society. Commonweal *is reprinting major portions of this text (which also appeared in the July 31 issue of the NC documentary service* Origins*) so that readers can have fuller access both to Curran's position and his style of thought. A final, revised version of this text is to appear in the* Proceedings *of the College Theology Society.* THE EDITORS

IN THE FALL of 1985 I agreed to give this plenary session. Since that time there has been some water over the dam. The Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has urged me to "reconsider and to retract those positions which violate the conditions for a professor to be called a Catholic theologian." According to Cardinal Ratzinger, the prefect of the congregation, there is an inherent contradiction if "one who is to teach in the name of the church in fact denies her teaching." . . .

From the very beginning I am conscious of my own prejudices and biases. This paper is presented from my own perspective and therefore is bound to serve as an apologetic or defense of my position. However, at the same time I have the broader intention of using this case to raise up the important issues which the theological community, the hierarchical teaching office in the Roman Catholic church and the total people of God need to address. . . .

The general context for the entire case is that of the Roman Catholic church and Catholic theology. I have made it very clear that I am a believing Catholic and intend to do Catholic theology. Despite my intentions, I still might be wrong; but I maintain that my positions are totally acceptable for a Catholic theologian who is a believing Roman Catholic.

The mission of the entire church is to be faithful to the word and work of Jesus. God's revelation has been handed over and entrusted to the church, which faithfully hands this down from generation to generation through the assistance of the Holy Spirit. Roman Catholicism recognizes that revelation was closed at the end of apostolic times, but revelation itself develops and is understood in the light of the different historical and cultural circumstances of the hearers and doers of the Word. . . . The early councils of the fourth, fifth, and subsequent centuries illustrate how in matters touching the very heart of faith — the understanding of God and of Jesus Christ — the living church felt the need to go beyond the words of the Scripture, to understand better and more adequately the revelation of God. . . . Fidelity to the tradition does not mean merely repeating the very words of the Scripture or of older church teaching. The Christian tradition is a living tradition, and fidelity involves a creative fidelity which seeks to preserve in its own time and place the incarnational principle. Creative fidelity is the task of the church in bearing witness to the word and work of Jesus.

FATHER CHARLES E. CURRAN *teaches moral theology at Catholic University of America.*

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In carrying out its call to creative fidelity to the word and work of Jesus, the church is helped by the papal and episcopal roles in the church. The existence of this pastoral teaching function of pope and bishops in the church must be recognized by all. However, there has been much development in the understanding of the exact nature of that teaching office, how it is exercised and what is its relationship to the other functions connected with the office of pope and bishops in the church. Much of the following discussion will center on what is often called today the ordinary magisterium of the papal office. This term *ordinary magisterium* understood in this present sense has only been in use since the nineteenth century. A Catholic must recognize the pastoral office of teaching given to the pope and bishops, but also to realize that this teaching function has been exercised in different ways over the years. . . .

What in my judgment are the primary issues involved in my case? Five issues will be considered: the role of the theologian, the possibility of public theological dissent from some non-infallible hierarchical church teachings, the possibility and right of dissent by the Christian faithful, the justice and fairness of the process, and academic freedom for theology and Catholic institutions of higher learning.

The September 17, 1985, letter from Cardinal Ratzinger calls upon me to retract my positions in the following specific areas: contraception and sterilization; abortion and euthanasia; masturbation, premarital intercourse and homosexual acts; the indissolubility of marriage. However, these issues and agreement with my positions on these issues do not constitute the major points of contention in the dispute between the congregation and myself. These are important topics, but they are primarily illustrative of the more fundamental issues involved. However, it is necessary to point out that in all these issues my position is quite nuanced.

1. Role of the theologian

. . . Many and probably the majority of Catholic theologians writing today see the role of the Catholic theologian as somewhat independent and cooperative in relationship to the hierarchical office and not delegated or derivative from the role of pope and bishops. The theologian is a scholar who studies critically, thematically, and systematically Christian faith and action. Such a scholar must theologize within the Catholic faith context and must give due importance to all the *loci theologici,* including the teaching of the hierarchical magisterium. The Catholic theologian to be such must give the required assent to official church teaching, but the theologian does not derive his or her theological office from delegation by the hierarchical officeholders. Likewise the teaching function of pope and bishops uses an entirely different methodology from the teaching function of theologians. . . .

However, there is a very different understanding of the role of the theologian found in more recent church legislation. The new Code of Canon Law, which came into effect in the fall of 1983, and the apostolic constitution of ecclesiastical faculties and universities, *Sapientia Christiana,* understand the role of the theologian as primarily derived from the hierarchical teaching office and functioning by reason of delegation given by the hierarchical teaching office. A good illustration of this understanding is found in Canon 812 of the new Code of Canon Law: "Those who teach theological subjects in any institution of higher studies must have a mandate from the competent ecclesiastical authority." . . .

It seems there has been an interesting, even contradictory, development in Catholic documents within the last few years. The more theoretical documents seem to indicate a recognition for a somewhat independent and cooperative role of theologians, whereas the legislative documents understand the theological role as derivative and delegated from the hierarchical teaching office.

There is no doubt that from the nineteenth century until recent times the role of the theologian was seen as subordinate to and derivative from the hierarchical teaching office. However, Vatican Council II in its general ecclesiology and in its understanding of theologians can be interpreted to adopt a more cooperative and somewhat independent understanding of the role of theologians vis-à-vis the hierarchical magisterium. The cooperative model does not deny the official role of the hierarchical office in protecting and proclaiming the faith, but theology is a scholarly discipline distinct from but related to the proclamation of the faith by the hierarchical teaching office. . . .

The correspondence between the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and myself never explicitly goes into this question as such, but the congregation is operating out of a derivative understanding of the role of the theologian while I adopt the somewhat independent and cooperative understanding.

2. Public dissent from some non-infallible teachings

The correspondence from the congregation indicates that the problem is public dissent and not just private dissent. However, the meaning of public is never developed. The entire investigation centers on my theological writings, so the only logical conclusion is that *public* here refers to theological writings. Private dissent apparently means something that is not written and is not spoken publicly.

In 1979, after receiving the first set of observations from the congregation, I had the feeling that the investigation would soon focus clearly on the public aspect of dissent and on the manner and mode of dissent. Past experience was the basis for this judgment.

In 1968 I acted as the spokesperson for a group of theologians who ultimately numbered over six hundred and issued a public statement at a press conference which concluded that Catholic spouses may responsibly decide according to their conscience that artificial contraception in some circumstances is permissible and even necessary to preserve and foster the values and sacredness of marriage. In response to this statement, the trustees of the Catholic University of America on September 5, 1969, mandated an inquiry in accord with academic due process to determine if the Catholic University

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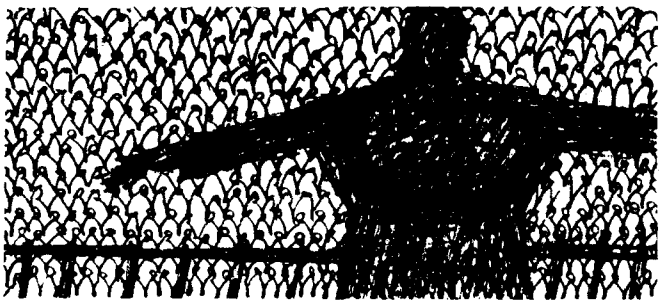
professors involved in this dissent had violated by their declarations and actions their responsibilities to the university.

A few months later the object of the inquiry had definitely changed. "Hence the focus of the present inquiry is on the style and method whereby some faculty members expressed personal dissent from papal teaching" and apparently helped organize additional public dissent to such teaching. The board of trustees did not question the right of a scholar to have or hold private dissent from non-infallible church teaching. In the context of the inquiry it became clear that public and organized dissent referred primarily to holding a press conference and to actively soliciting other theologians to sign the original statement. The primary question of public dissent thus was not regular theological publication but the use of the more popular media.

In response to this new focus of the inquiry, the subject professors at Catholic University, through their counsel, pointed out the changed focus but went on to show that such public and organized dissent in the popular media was a responsible action by Catholic theologians. The shift in the focus of the inquiry seemed to come from the fact that the trustees, including the bishops on the board of trustees, were willing to recognize the possibility of even public dissent in theological journals as being legitimate, but objected to the use of the popular media. The faculty inquiry committee fully agreed with the thrust of the argument proposed by the professors, and the professors were exonerated in this hearing.

However, to my surprise, the investigation from the congregation never moved explicitly into the direction of the manner and mode of dissent and even at times the use of popular media. The conclusion logically follows from the position taken by the congregation that the only acceptable form of dissent on these issues is that which is neither written nor spoken publicly. At most the theologian can think in a dissenting way, perhaps even discuss the matter in private and write private letters to the proper authorities explaining the reasons for one's dissent. It is safe to say that the vast majority of Catholic theologians writing today explicitly disagree with the position of the congregation. For this reason I have remained surprised even to the present day that the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith was proposing such a restricted notion of legitimate theological dissent from such non-infallible teaching. In principle, they seem to allow for no public theological dissent even in theological journals on non-infallible church teaching.

THE CENTRAL POINT at issue in the controversy is the possibility of public theological dissent from some non-infallible teaching. I have always pointed out in the correspondence that I have been dealing with the non-infallible hierarchical teaching office. This position was accepted by the congregation in all of the correspondence prior to the September 17, 1985, letter to me from Cardinal Ratzinger. A very few Catholic theologians have maintained that the teaching on artificial contraception is infallible from the ordinary teaching of pope and bishops throughout the world. However, this



position is not held by the vast majority of theologians and has not been proposed or defended by the congregation. One could also maintain that the Catholic teaching on divorce is infallible by reason of the teaching of the Council of Trent. However, the phrasing of the canons with regard to the indissolubility of marriage, the attempt not to condemn the practice of *economia* of the Greek church and the somewhat broad understanding of *anathema sit* at that time of Trent argue against the infallible nature of the Catholic church's teaching on the indissolubility of marriage. Accepted standard textbooks, such as that of Adnes, recognize that the teaching on absolute intrinsic indissolubility is not infallible. Thus my position all along has been that I have never denied an infallible teaching of the church.

However, in the September 17 letter Cardinal Ratzinger seems to claim that the assent of faith is somehow involved in my case. I have strenuously maintained that the assent of faith is not involved and we are dealing with the *obsequium religiosum* which is due in cases of non-infallible teaching. However, it is very clear that the congregation maintains that the *obsequium religiosum* due to non-infallible teaching does not allow the theologian to dissent publicly in these cases.

Cardinal Ratzinger himself has called the distinction between infallible and non-infallible teaching "legalistic." Only in this century have theologians made this distinction in such a sharp way. "When one affirms that non-infallible doctrines, even though they make up part of the teaching of the church, can be legitimately contested, one ends up by destroying the practice of the Christian life and reduces the faith to a collection of doctrines." . . .

It is true that the sharp distinction between infallible and non-infallible teaching is recent, for it became prevalent only at the time of the First Vatican Council (1870), which defended the infallibility of the pope. . . .

The distinction became well entrenched in the theology manuals of the twentieth century before Vatican II. Such a distinction helped to explain that official teaching on some issues had been wrong and had subsequently been corrected (e.g., the condemnation of interest taking, the need for the intention of procreation to justify conjugal relations). At the time of Vatican Council I and later it was also pointed out that Popes Liberius (d. 366), Vigilius (d. 555) and Honorius (d. 638), all proposed erroneous teachings which were subsequently rejected through theological dissent.

Vatican Council II changed many earlier teachings such as those on religious freedom and the relationship of the Roman Catholic church to other Christian churches and to the true

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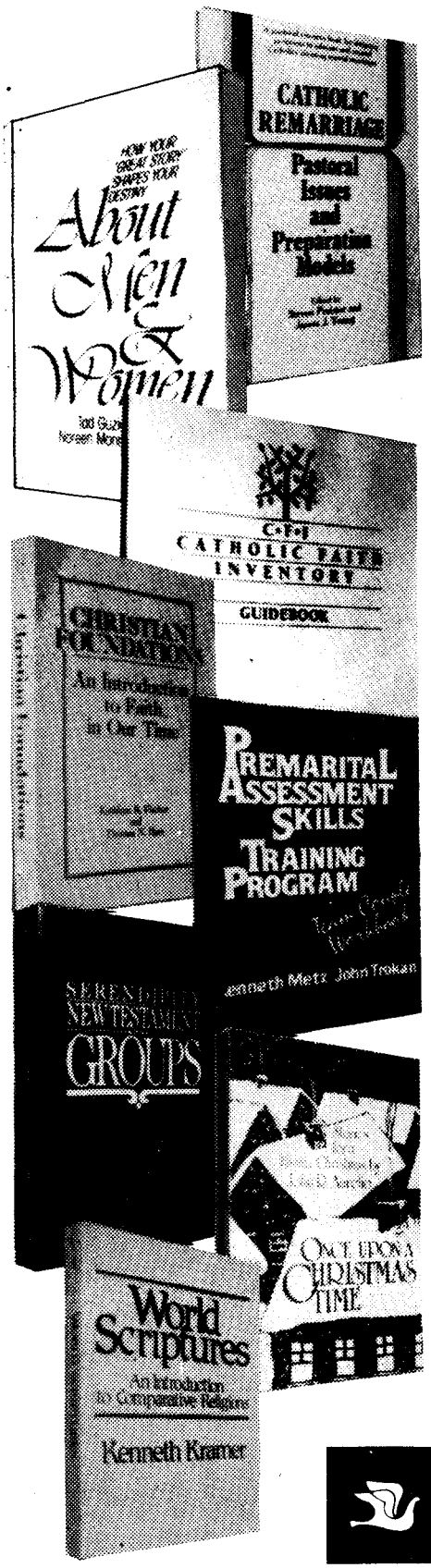

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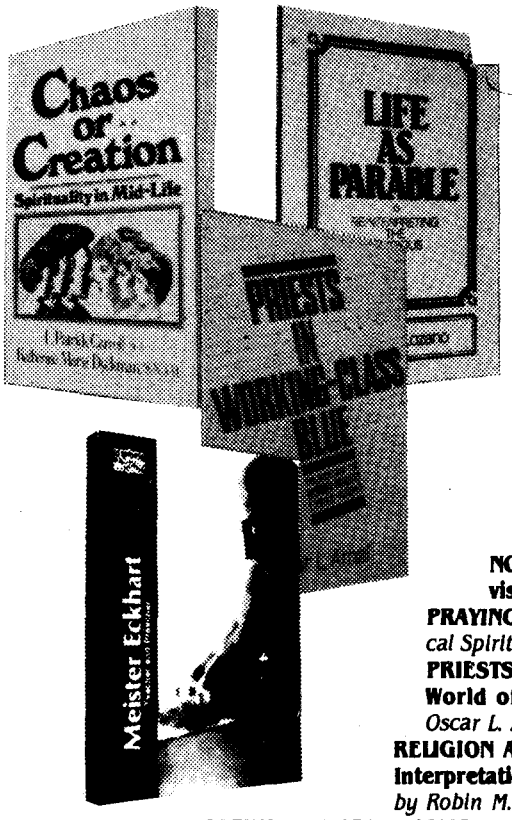

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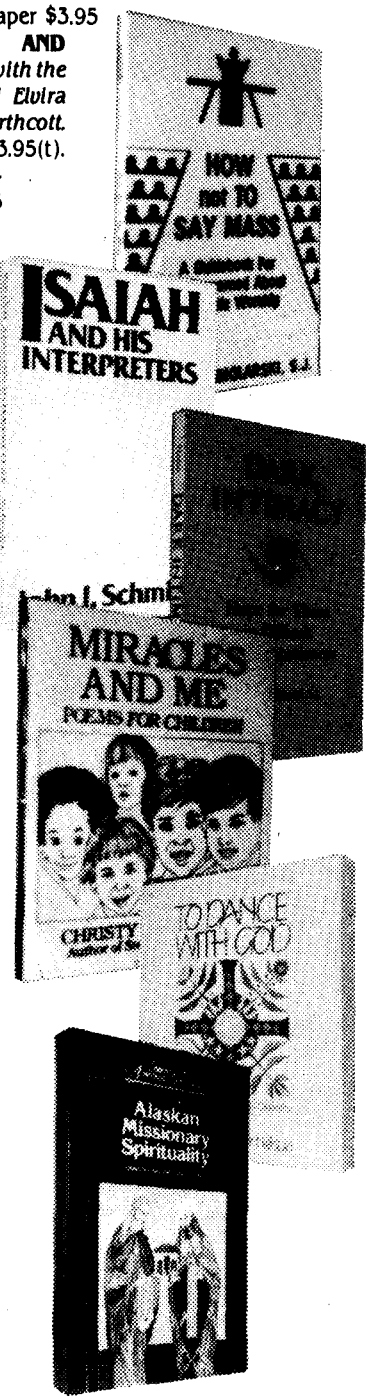

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church of Jesus Christ. Scripture scholars for the last generation or so have publicly disagreed with the teachings that were proposed by the biblical commission in the first two decades of this century. The theologians thus recognized the distinction between infallible and non-infallible teaching and used it, among other purposes, to explain why certain earlier errors in church teaching did not refute the Vatican I teaching on papal infallibility. These theologians likewise recognized the possibility of dissent from such non-infallible teaching at times, but did not explicitly justify public dissent.

The theologians are not the only ones to use this distinction. *Lumen Gentium,* the Constitution on the Church of the Second Vatican Council, recognizes this distinction between infallible and non-infallible teaching and the two different types of assent which are due (No. 25). The new Code of Canon Law clearly distinguishes between the assent of faith and the *obsequium religiosum* of intellect and will which is due to the authoritative teaching of the pope and college of bishops even when they do not intend to proclaim that doctrine by a definitive act (Canon 752). This distinction is thus not only accepted by theologians but also by official documents and by the new Code of Canon Law.

Some theological manuals and many contemporary theologians understand the *obsequium religiosum* owed to authoritative, non-infallible teaching to justify at times the possibility of theological dissent and, at the present time, even public dissent. Some bishops conferences explicitly recognized the legitimacy of dissent from the papal encyclical *Humanae Vitae* issued in 1968. Also documents from bishops conferences have recognized the possibility of public theological dissent from some non-infallible church teaching. The U.S. bishops in their 1968 pastoral letter "Human Life in Our Day" pinpoint that in non-infallible teaching there is always a presumption in favor of the magisterium — a position held by most theologians. However, the pastoral letter also recognizes the legitimacy of public theological dissent from such teaching if the reasons are serious and well-founded, if the manner of the dissent does not question or impugn the teaching authority of the church, and if the dissent is such as not to give scandal. . . .

One significant aspect of the question deserves mention here because of some recent developments — the understanding and translation of *obsequium religiosum*. *Obsequium* has often been translated as submission or obedience. Bishop Christopher Butler was, to my knowledge, the first to translate the word *obsequium* as respect. Francis Sullivan, in his book on magisterium . . . claims that "submission" and not "due respect" is the proper translation of *obsequium,* but the Gregorian University professor still recognizes the possibility and legitimacy of public dissent from authoritative, non-infallible teaching.

The English text of the Code of Canon Law found in the commentary commissioned by the Canon Law Society of America and authorized by the executive committee of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in the United States translates *obsequium* as respect. Ladislas Orsy, in a recent commentary on Canon 752, recognizes difficulties in translating *obsequium* but opts for respect. Orsy also recognizes the possibility of legitimate public dissent from some authoritative, non-infallible teaching. . . .

I DISAGREE WITH Cardinal Ratzinger's attempt to smooth over somewhat the clear distinction between fallible and non-infallible teaching, but his remarks show the need to say something in addition to the distinction between infallible and non-infallible teaching. What about the danger of reducing the Christian faith in practice to a small, abstract core?

In my own comments about this case, I have been careful not only to use the distinction between infallible and non-infallible teaching but also to talk about what is core and central to the faith as distinguished from those things that are more removed and peripheral. Also I have consistently spoken about the right to dissent publicly from *some* non-infallible church teaching. The distinction between infallible and non-infallible church teaching is absolutely necessary, but not sufficient. . . .

As important as the concept of infallible teaching is, there are some very significant limitations involved in it. Infallible teaching, especially of the extraordinary type by pope or council, has usually come in response to an attack on or a denial of something central to the faith. However, some points which have never been attacked, such as the existence of God, have never been defined by the extraordinary hierarchical teaching office. On the other hand, the limits and imperfections of any infallible teaching have been rightly recognized. Infallible teaching itself is always open to development, better understanding, and even purification. Thus, one must be careful when speaking about infallible teaching both because some things might pertain to the core of faith which have at least not been infallibly taught by the extraordinary teaching function of the pope and bishops, and because even infallible teaching itself is open to development and further interpretation. However, in the present discussion the distinction between infalli-

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ble and non-infallible is very important. It allows me to deal with a limited area — the area of non-infallible teaching. I am in no way questioning what is an essential matter of Catholic faith.

Within this large area of what is non-infallible and not central to the Christian faith, it is necessary to recognize various degrees and levels of relationship to faith. Here an updating of the older theological notes would be very useful. I have recognized this fact by consciously referring to dissent from *some* non-infallible teachings which are somewhat removed from the core and central faith realities. . . .

The Catholic tradition in moral theology has insisted that its moral teaching is based primarily on natural law and not primarily on faith or the Scripture. The natural law is understood to be human reason reflecting on human nature. Even those teachings which have some basis in Scripture (e.g., the indissolubility of marriage, homosexuality) were also said to be based on natural law. This insistence on the rational nature of Catholic moral teaching recognizes such teaching can and should be shared by all human beings of all faiths and of no faith. Such teachings are thus somewhat removed from the core of Catholic faith as such. . . .

In addition, the issues under discussion are specific, concrete, universal moral norms existing in the midst of complex reality. Logic demands that the more specific and complex the reality, the less is the possibility of certitude. Moral norms, in my judgment, are not the primary, or the only, or the most important concern of moral teaching and of moral theology. Moral teaching deals with general perspectives, values, attitudes, and dispositions as well as norms. Values, attitudes and dispositions are much more important and far-reaching for the moral life than are norms. These values and dispositions by their very nature are somewhat more general and can be more universally accepted as necessary for Christian and human life.

Within the church all can and should agree that the disciples of Jesus are called to be loving, faithful, hopeful, caring people who strive to live out the reality of the paschal mystery. Disrespect for persons, cheating, slavery, dishonesty, and injustice are always wrong. However, the universal binding force of specific concrete material norms cannot enjoy the same degree or level of certitude. Norms exist to protect and promote values, but in practice conflicts often arise in the midst of the complexity and specificity involved. Thus the issues under consideration in this case are quite far removed from the core of faith and exist at such a level of complexity and specificity that one has to recognize some possibility of dissent.

It is also necessary to recognize the necessary distinction between the possibility of dissent and the legitimacy of dissent on particular questions. Reasons must be given which are convincing in order to justify the dissent in practice. The central issue involved in the controversy between the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and myself is the possibility of public theological dissent from some non-infallible teaching which is quite remote from the core of faith, heavily dependent

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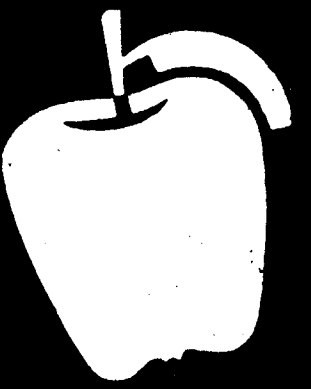

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on support from human reason, and involved in such complexity and specificity that logically one cannot claim absolute certitude. . . .

3. The Christian faithful & dissent

There is a third aspect or issue which has not received the attention it needs — the possibility and legitimacy of dissent on the part of the members of the church. In a very true sense my present controversy involves more than just the role of theologians in the church.

There can be no doubt that much of the friction between theologians and the hierarchical magisterium has occurred on more practical questions, including moral issues touching on sexuality. The issues are not just abstract questions about which people speculate, but they involve concrete decisions about specific actions which are to be done. Problems arise in these areas precisely because they involve more than speculation. Here the position proposed by theologians might have some practical bearing on how people live. All must recognize that the distinction between the roles of bishops and theologians would be much clearer if the role of theologians were restricted to the realm of speculation, with no effect on what people do in practice. However, life is not so easily compartmentalized.

Elsewhere I have defended the fact that on some issues a loyal Catholic may disagree in theory and in practice with the church's non-infallible teaching and still consider oneself a loyal and good Roman Catholic. In a sense, under certain conditions one can speak of a right of the Catholic faithful to dissent from certain non-infallible teachings. In the aftermath of *Humanae Vitae* in 1968 some bishops' conferences recognized that dissent in practice from the encyclical's teaching condemning artifical contraception could be legitimate and did not cut one off from the body of the faithful. The congregation, in its correspondence with me, has not gone into this issue. Those who deny the legitimacy of such dissent in practice would seem to face a difficult ecclesiological problem when confronted with the fact that the vast majority of fertile Catholic spouses use artificial contraception. What is the relationship of these spouses to the Roman Catholic church?

The importance of recognizing this possibility and even right on the part of the faithful greatly affects how the theologian functions. If there is such a possibility, then the individual members of the Catholic church have a right to know about it. I hasten to add that the individual members also have a right to know what is the official teaching of the church and should be conscious of the dangers of finitude and sin that can skewer any human decision. Public dissent by a Catholic theologian would then be called for not only because theologians must discuss with one another in the attempt to understand better God's word and to arrive at truth, but also because the people of God need this information to make their own moral decisions. Thus, for example, in the light of the situation present at the time of the issuance of the encyclical *Humanae Vitae* in 1968, it was important for Roman Catholic spouses to know that they did not have to make a choice between using artificial contraception under some conditions and ceasing to be members of the Roman Catholic church. The Catholic theologian, among others, had an obligation to tell this to Catholic spouses.

THE POSSIBILITY for legitimate dissent in practice by the faithful also affects the matter of scandal. The U.S. bishops in their 1968 letter proposed three conditions under which public theological dissent is in order. One of these conditions is that the dissent be such as not to give scandal. In my correspondence with the congregation I repeatedly asked them for criteria which should govern public dissent in the church. No developed criteria were ever forthcoming. . . .

Scandal in the strict sense is an action or omission which provides another the occasion of sinning. In the broad sense, scandal is the wonderment and confusion which are caused by a certain action or omission. . . .

There can be no doubt that in the past there has been a strong tendency on the part of the hierarchical leaders of the church to look upon the faithful as poor and ignorant sheep who had to be protected and helped. This same vision and understanding of the ordinary common people also lay behind an older Catholic justification of monarchy and government from above. Catholic social teaching itself has changed in the twentieth century and accepted the need for and importance of democratic political institutions. No longer are the citizens the poor sheep or the "ignorant multitude," to use the phrase employed by Pope Leo XIII. So too the members of the church can no longer be considered as poor sheep; but greater importance must be given to their increased education and rights in all areas, including religion.

Perhaps at times theologians, who often associate with people who are well-educated, will fail to give enough importance to the danger of disturbing some of the faithful with their teachings. However, in this day and age it seems many more Catholic lay people would be scandalized if theologians were forbidden to discuss publicly important topics of the day such as contraception, divorce, abortion, and homosexuality. These issues are being discussed at great length and in all places today, and theologians must be able to enter into the discussion even to the point of dissenting from some official Catholic teaching. In addition, if the faithful can at times dissent in practice and remain loyal Roman Catholics, then they have the right to know what theologians are discussing. . . . The right of the faithful in this matter definitely colors one's approach to public theological dissent and to the dangers of scandal brought about by such dissent or the lack of it.

4. Justice & fairness of the process

Catholic theology has always emphasized the incarnational principle with its emphasis on visible human structures. Catholic ecclesiology well illustrates this approach by insisting on the church as a visible human community — the people of God with a hierarchical office. The visible church strives to be a sacrament or sign of the presence of God in the world, in and through this visible community.

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Within the community there are bound to be tensions involving the role of bishops and the role of theologians. . . . The role of the theologian by definition will often be that of probing. . . . The hierarchical teaching office must promote such creative and faithful theological activity, while at the same time it must rightly wait until these newer developments emerge more clearly. . . . The good of the church, the credibility of its teaching office, and the need to protect the rights of all concerned call for just ways of dealing with these inevitable tensions.

The present case raises questions of justice and of the credibility of the teaching office of the church. . . . First, it is necessary for the congregation to state its position on public theological dissent from non-infallible teaching. . . . As mentioned earlier, the U.S. bishops in 1968, in the light of the controversy engendered by *Humanae Vitae*, proposed three conditions for justifying public dissent from non-infallible teaching. The three conditions are: The reasons must be serious and well-founded; the manner of the dissent must not question or impugn the teaching authority of the church; and it must not give scandal. I have consistently maintained that my dissent has been in accord with these norms. The congregation was unwilling to accept these norms. Does the congregation disagree with the U.S. bishops and with the vast majority of Catholic theologians? . . .

In addition, there is need for juridical structures which better safeguard justice and the rights of all concerned. . . . The congregation, in a letter to me, has defended its procedures because the *ratio agendi* is not a trial, but rather a procedure designed to generate a careful and accurate examination of the contents of published writings by the author. However, since the process can result in severe punishment for the person involved, it seems that such a process should incorporate the contemporary standards of justice found in other juridical proceedings.

One set of problems stems from the fact that the congregation is the prosecutor, the judge, and jury. Some people have objected strongly to the fact that the cardinal-prefect has commented publicly on the present case and disagreed in the public media with my position while the case has been in progress. Problems have also been raised against the existing procedures from the viewpoints of the secrecy of the first part of the process, the failure to allow the one being investigated to have counsel, the failure to disclose the accusers and the total record to the accused, and the lack of any substantive appeal process. . . .

5. Academic freedom, theology, & Catholic institutions

. . . Today the leaders of Catholic higher education in the United States strongly insist on the need for academic freedom and institutional autonomy. The crux of the problem is to

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reconcile the existence of academic freedom and insitutional autonomy with the truth claims made by the Catholic church and its hierarchical teaching office. More specifically, the question is can and should Catholic theology be responsibly taught and researched in the context of academic freedom and institutional autonomy?

From the viewpoint of the American academy, there is a greater awareness today of the bankruptcy of an older insistence on being value free or value neutral. Values should be very important in all the human disciplines. Thus there is in general a greater openness in American academe today to accept the adacemic respectibility of disciplines like theology. However, the question is can Catholic theology accept the American concept of academic freedom? There has not been as much discussion in this area as there should be.

I will briefly describe how I think academic freedom and Catholic theology are compatible. Academic freedom and institutional autonomy mean that any decision affecting promotion, hiring, or dismissal of faculty members must be made by peers in the academy and not by outside persons or forces of any kind. Academic freedom respects the freedom of the scholar to pursue truth with no limits placed on scholarship other than honesty and competency. The accepted principles of academic freedom recognize that even tenured faculty members can be terminated if they are incompetent and the judgment of incompetency is made by academic peers.

Competency for the Catholic theologian demands that one theogogize within the pale of the Roman Catholic faith. The Catholic theologian must teach Catholic theology as such; otherwise one is incompetent as a Catholic theologian. Peers in judging the competency of a Catholic theologian must give due weight to the teaching of the hierarchical magisterium. However, the ultimate decision with juridical effects must be made by peers in the academy. The hierarchical magisterium is always free if it deems it necessary to point out the errors and ambiguities in the work of a theologian, but it cannot make decisions having direct juridical effect in the academy.

There is no doubt that academic freedom gives some added protection to the rights of the Catholic theological scholar. . . . Such protection is not only good for the discipline of Catholic theology, but also is good for the total church as it strives for creative fidelity to the word and work of Jesus. . . .

THE ACADEMIC FREEDOM of Catholic institutions and of Catholic theology is an important theoretical question with many practical consequences. . . . Perhaps the most significant practical consequence at the present time concerns the financial threat to the very existence of Catholic higher education in the United States.

Catholic colleges and universities receive a large amount of financial help in different forms from the public monies of the state. In the past the Supreme Court has ruled such public funding is acceptable for Catholic higher education but not for Catholic elementary and high schools. The difference between higher and lower education is that in higher education there is no indoctrination and the principles of academic freedom are observed. Thus, if there were no academic freedom and institutional autonomy for Catholic higher education, it might very well be that the court would rule that public funding for Catholic institutions of higher learning is unconsitutional. . . .

If the Vatican congregation or any ecclesiastical authority can declare someone no longer a Catholic theologian and unable to teach in the name of the church, and thereby prevent that professor from continuing to teach Catholic theology in a Catholic institution, this seems to be a violation of academic freedom. Some maintain that this is the case only for a very few ecclesiastical faculties or universities such as the Catholic University of America. . . . However, in the light of the new Code of Canon Law with its Canon 812, the same problems about academic freedom exist for all Catholic institutions of higher learning. . . . I insist that the question of the academic freedom and institutional autonomy respecting Catholic higher education and Catholic theology should not ultimately be decided because of practical consequences for Catholic higher education; but on the other hand, one cannot ignore these possible consequences. . . .

Screen

PLAYS ON FILM

'EXTREMITIES' & 'NIGHT MOTHER'

EXTREMITIES and *'Night Mother* are the first of about ten recent (and decent) plays (including *Crimes of the Heart, Children of a Lesser God,* and others) that will premiere as films in the next six months, the result of a strange but happy twist in Hollywood production strategies. Apparently independently, a number of producers decided that such plays could be turned into films at small cost for a sure return.

The plays involve low budgets: they require no special effects, only one or two sets, and role-starved actors willing to take pay cuts to perform in literate screenplays. Moreover, even if such plays address a limited audience, the producers see it as a sure one, the so-called "white-wine-and-brie" crowd. Thus, the same filmmaking-by-demography that has led to all the movies for designated age groups (children, preteens, postadolescents, recent college grads, big chill yup-

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pies et al.) has temporarily, ironically, led to a happy end.

More or less. When plays become films, they always face a difficult translation, and what works in one medium fails in another. Film is both less and more realistic: less in its freedom with time and space, and more in its ability to focus, close-up, on an actor as a real person. To some degree, a play's restricted use of time and space has to be "opened up" in film to include wider, sometimes improbable, circles of physical action. On the other hand, *psychological* improbabilities can be carried off better in live theater, where a strong (even ranting) performance more readily evokes a willing suspension of our disbelief. Film needs less "speech" and more "business."

Extremities has managed the translation more smoothly than *'Night Mother*. Both were adapted to the screen with the aid of their playwrights, William Mastrosimone in the former case and Marsha Norman in the latter. Both concern dire but important subjects, rape and retaliation in *Extremities* and suicide in *'Night Mother*. But *Extremities* succeeds because the play itself was less talky than most, and thus is apt for film, where visuals are so strong that words work better when understated. In addition, Mastrosimone and Director Robert Young have "opened up" the play just enough while retaining its integrity. The result is both exciting and thoughtful, and one of the year's best films.

Extremities lasts only ninety minutes, but not a second is wasted, either dramatically or photographically. Several new scenes have been added at the beginning of the film to provide information and action. Indeed, Mastrosimone and Young have added an outdoor, attempted rape to foreshadow the later attempt in the house in which most of the story occurs. There, paradoxically, Mastrosimone and Young make the film potent by keeping it "closed" — by limiting the shots, angles, and action to produce a sense of claustrophobia. *Extremities* is dominated by constant use of close ups of only two main characters in one static setting. A would-be rapist continually threats and torments a woman, resulting in charged, packed visual frames that almost physically burst their seams. By being true to its source in this *apt* way, the film is a perfect match of style and content.

The acting is also quietly powerful, with the lead played by Farrah Fawcett, who I suppose must be referred to "as an ex-Charlie's Angel." But Miss Fawcett excelled in the play *Extremities*, astonishing those who thought her infamous blonde and airy hairdo had something to do with what went on inside her head. In fact, her roots are literary, her father is the famous publisher, and her last television job was *The Burning Bed*, in which she played a victim of spouse abuse with powerful intensity.

In *Extremities*, she is again equal to a harsh, unglamorous role. Indeed, even before she is attacked, she is unafraid of looking faded. But she actually becomes haggard as she defends herself against her attacker (James Russo) when he breaks into her house and slowly, torturously, prepares to rape and kill her. Disarming him by spraying roach repellent in his face, Fawcett becomes a scarifying fury when she considers vengeance. Few actresses could make convincing the grotesque scenes where she binds and imprisons the unconscious rapist inside her fireplace, and then starts preparing a grave for him in her vegetable garden. Fawcett achieves more: she is sympathetic, even in resisting the conventional moral arguments of her roommates (Deana Scarwid, Alfe Woodard) who return from work late in the film.

Extremities, in part, files a "feminist" brief for better law and order. Although there are some narrative holes, the film documents the relaxed attitude of the police to potential sexual crimes or, more accurately, to *work* at having to investigate them. The film includes an early scene where Fawcett pleads for help from a bureaucratic woman cop to illustrate that token personnel changes don't necessarily mean greater sensitivity. The film also satirizes the ability of defense lawyers (whom Russo, once "jailed" in the fireplace, mimics perfectly) to try the rape victim, not the rapist.

Although specifically about rape, *Extremities* also makes more general political statements about the need for protection from criminals and the public perception that current law enforcement is not adequate to the task. These are serious issues, and one wishes that *Extremities*, despite the virtue of its small design, could probe them more. At least its honest treatment will not let such concerns be dismissed as right-wing propaganda. Generically, it resembles such films as *Death Wish*, Clint Eastwood's "Dirty Harry" movies, and Stallone's *Cobra*, which he claims is about victims' rights. Emotionally, it rescues the issue of law and order from their clutches. It provides an unforgettable close-up of a victim's experience and a provocative defense of a victim's anger. It transcends the easy clichés of both "law-and-order" ideologues and liberals who talk as if no one, except the state, were ever guilty of anything. It reminds one of the difficulty, and the necessity, of realizing that misunderstood goal of our Constitution, "to establish justice." When Fawcett starts to dig Russo's grave, the film unearths some middle ground that is well worth examining.

'NIGHT MOTHER is a dry, tedious adaptation until its close. Sissy Spacek plays a young woman determined to commit suicide; Anne Bancroft plays, and at first dreadfully overacts as, the mother with whom Spacek lives somewhere down South. Spacek is adequate, and like Fawcett dares to appear without makeup. But she alone can't overcome defects of the plot.

On stage, such defects would not be so evident. Norman's play concerns a cold, rational-looking decision to commit suicide. Spacek endures no severe depression, no black cloud, no sudden unbearable catastrophe that drives her to the edge. Instead, we must accept, as motive, an accumulation of disappointments, culminating in a Christmas when "nothing happened." ("Precisely," Spacek explains, "That's it.") Indeed, the story's main "action," until the close, consists of conversation (in the kitchen, the bedroom, the living room of a single house) as Bancroft attempts to dissuade her daughter, who calmly goes through domestic items to be dealt with after she pulls the trigger — including what to do between phoning

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the police and the arrival of the ambulance.

Perhaps this could be made convincing, at least blackly amusing in drama. But film's realism denies a performer the theatricality necessary to make credible such cool, quasi-absurdist melodrama. Only when "business" occurs — some *intemperate tossing of cans, for example* — is the awkward psychology displaced enough off center to soften our incredulity. When the dialogue unearths the past history of the family, especially some buried secrets about epilepsy, it leaves a contrived impression. Spacek not only lacks our sympathy, but our interest.

Brancroft overcompensates. Although she looks her frumpy part, she tries too hard to be down-home, and with glasses pushed to the edge of her nose, mugs stereotypically. Only near the end, when, alternately, she accepts her daughter's decision but then tries to stop her physically, is Bancroft compelling. Her final scenes rivet as nothing else in the film. But it is too little, too late. TOM O'BRIEN

Books: 007—CONSPIRACY OR ACCIDENT?

SHOOTDOWN
FLIGHT 007 AND THE AMERICAN CONNECTION
R.W. Johnson
Viking, $18.95, 335 pp.

Marilyn J. Young and Michael K. Launer

ALTHOUGH it has been three years since the Soviet Union shot down KAL 007, events surrounding the airliner's tragic fate remain shrouded in mystery. Numerous articles and at least seven books have already appeared, with two or three more expected soon. Public interest continues high, but, given the impossibility of definitively determining why the shootdown happened, only disparate, tenuous hypotheses have been advanced. These fall into two classes, the accidental and the conspiratorial. Regardless of orientation, however, all suffer from the fact that no single author commands the technical, political, and linguistic expertise necessary to avoid damaging errors.

Beyond that, of course, many of the writers have had a political or ideological axe to grind, which might or might not be announced but is always discernible.

R.W. Johnson's *Shootdown* belongs to the conspiracy camp. Mr. Johnson maintains that the Korean airliner was on a spy mission. Viking has marketed the book that way, promising in full-page ads to refund the purchase price to anyone who can "shoot down" Johnson's conclusions. He does not claim certain knowledge of this conspiracy, but it is obvious that he believes it to be true.

In December 1983, *The Guardian* published Johnson's unsubstantiated claim that intelligence requirements combined with the hope of derailing the Western European peace movement, led the CIA to provoke a violent Soviet action. How better to justify placing Pershing II and cruise missiles in Britain and West Germany? "It is the U.S.," Johnson wrote at that time, "which owes the USSR an apology." *Shootdown* represents his attempt to assemble proofs demonstrating U.S. culpability. In addition, the book posits a scenario in which such a drastic and dangerous course of action might make political sense.

We are convinced, however, that Johnson has no solid evidence for his belief. To demonstrate this, we will concentrate on three technical areas, examining the author's use of sources and his proof.

Throughout the book Johnson misuses sources, particularly when discussing the primary reason, in his mind, for executing such a spy mission in the first place: a new radar installation deep within Siberia, well over 3000 km. from the areas KAL overflew. Johnson admits that the CIA already knew this radar would not violate the ABM treaty, contrary to claims from the far right. Furthermore, a "passive probe" could have elicited little useful intelligence regarding Soviet radar.

Yet, in making this claim Johnson ignores information from one of his own sources, an article by Philip J. Klass, then Senior Avionics Editor of *Aviation Week and Space Technology*. Klass indicates that KAL's flight could not possibly have been detected by either this new radar installation under construction or a similar one in operation in Kamchatka because such equipment is designed to ignore the presence of aircraft.

This leaves the author without an adequate motivation except, perhaps, that the CIA had fostered the false notion of Soviet ABM treaty violations to appease critics on the far right; then the agency, believing its own disinformation, proceeded to concoct a fantastic scheme to prove it true. Actually, the most interesting parts of *Shootdown* are directed toward supporting this rationale.

Johnson's discussion of possible U.S. monitoring of KAL relies on mistaken claims of military radar capabilities previously published by David Pearson, also a conspiracy theorist. In following Pearson, the author has to ignore another of his sources, veteran reporter Murray Sayle. Sayle wrote in London's *Sunday Times* that the U.S. reconnaissance aircraft patrolling near Kamchatka Peninsula could not have spotted KAL or warned it because the RC-135 was not equipped with the necessary radar. In addition, according to civil aviation expert Douglas Feaver of the *Washington Post*, KAL was not under any Western civilian radar coverage for over 2000 miles of its journey.

Johnson, who knows no Russian, is wrong in his interpretation of most of the Soviet materials he uses. His discussion of taped reports by the SU-15 pilot who destroyed KAL and of Soviet claims that they methodically attempted to contact the aircraft by radio are refuted in an

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article to be published in *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*.

Johnson juxtaposes transcripts of two interchanges: KAL talking to Tokyo air traffic control and SU-15 reporting to its dispatcher. At one point the Soviet pilot requests "Say again." Johnson speculates that the dispatcher has relayed KAL's status report to SU-15, who manifests utter disbelief. But the actual Russian tape-recording does not support this interpretation. What *can* be heard from the pilot is a routine, unemotional request that a command be repeated, one of six such instances during the interception. In addition, the very premise of this section must be challenged; there is no evidence the Soviets monitored KAL's radio frequency. If they had, it is extremely unlikely that the disaster would have occurred.

But the worst technical chapters in the book deal with the crash itself and the search for KAL's flight recorder — the infamous "black box." According to specialists in anti-submarine warfare and search-and-rescue operations who participated in the recovery attempt, Johnson's description relies on simplification and "half-truths." These and other sources indicate that the Soviet missile probably exploded near the right inboard engine, ripping through the aft pressure bulkhead and destroying most of the steering mechanism. The aircraft would have remained intact, but the crew would have had little control over its flight.

Following regulations explicitly, KAL radioed Tokyo that it had lost pressurization and was descending to 10,000 feet, obviously hoping to stabilize the aircraft at this lower altitude. KAL's crew almost certainly struggled in vain to control the aircraft while plunging to their imminent deaths. The jetliner probably "went ballistic" in the final moments before impact, the effect of which was compared to "running it through a meat grinder." This explains why almost no bodies or large pieces of the plane were ever recovered.

Notwithstanding *Shootdown*'s "expose" of a U.S. cover-up involving retrieval of the black box, chances of finding the instrument were never good, what with uncertainty over the splashdown location, the rugged underwater terrain, and some of the world's most complex and little understood ocean currents. Johnson's assessment of U.S. recovery capabilities is vastly overestimated, our sources say, and his description of sonar techniques grossly simplified. After all, it took ten years to find the Titanic, and a flight recorder is smaller than your proverbial breadbox.

Similar criticism could be extended to nearly all of the technical discussions contained in *Shootdown*. Indeed, Philip Klass had this to say: "I've never read a book so filled with errors." And Harold Ewing, a senior 747 pilot who has studied the KAL records, indicated that Johnson's analysis of commercial airline procedures — ostensibly the most striking new information in the study — is wrong in many respects. In particular, Mr. Ewing has indicated that changes on the weight and balance manifest made by the pilot have an innocent explanation.

What, then, is the merit of *Shootdown*? For many readers it will probably be the analysis of the Reagan White House and relationships among CIA chief William Casey, National Security Advisor William Clark, UN Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, Secretary of State George Shultz, and other administration officials. On the whole, these sections (especially where the public relations aspects of Mr. Reagan's presidency are broached) ring much truer than any of Johnson's technical discussions. But many of his propositions are too speculative to be accepted readily. Nonetheless, the political material is both fascinating and shocking, particularly the extent to which the president has delegated decision-making to senior staff members, effectively isolating himself from the process.

Thus, the best reason for reading *Shootdown* is as a study of U.S. politics during the Reagan administration. But readers who expect to learn more about the fate of the KAL will be sorely disappointed, for this book contains virtually no original research and no new evidence.

So, Viking, about the refund . . . .

EXCERPTS from *The Target Is Destroyed* (Random House), Seymour Hersh's forthcoming book on KAL, have been published in the current *Atlantic Monthly*. Judging solely from this, it appears Hersh argues that KAL 007 arrived over Sakhalin Island as the result of pilot errors plus pure bad luck. Further, Hersh contends, Soviet military personnel did indeed believe the airliner was a U.S. reconnaissance plane. Although President Reagan soon learned from intelligence analysts that the Soviets probably did not know what they were shooting at, Hersh claims this information was ignored for political reasons.

It is interesting to compare Hersh's thesis and methodology with R.W. Johnson's. Johnson concedes that he has drawn his data almost exclusively from the public record, which means he relies on secondary sources, a practice some have labeled "scrapbook scholarship." Hersh interviewed officials in both the U.S. and USSR, as well as many individuals at the National Security Agency with intimate knowledge of top-secret information. In addition, he presents Harold Ewing's reconstruction of events that may have taken place in the cockpit of the airliner. Ewing's simulation, developed during his own flights over the correct route, is claimed to duplicate the track that NSA produced after lengthy analysis of Soviet radar activity.

Johnson begins with the postulate that only conscious action can account for highly improbable events. Ewing, and a fortiori Hersh, believes that aircraft disasters stem precisely from such a confluence — change any one circumstance and tragedy would be averted.

Both Hersh and Johnson incorporate considerable speculation about individual behavior and its decisive role in the Korean Airliner tragedy. But the data surrounding Hersh's assumptions are real, his sources original.

M.J.Y. & M.K.L.

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A N N O U N C I N G

the Fall issue of the new quarterly CRITIC

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a Trio of Stories

by Andrew M. Greeley

The new quarterly CRITIC begins its second year with a special issue featuring three stories of contemporary Catholic women by best-selling author Andrew M. Greeley; reflections on the stewardship of "God's country" by historian Martin E. Marty; faith encounters retold by theologian John Shea; some biting observations on the state of the Catholic press as only John Deedy can make them; plus the gleefully irreverent cartoons of Marty Murphy and a few wry musings on the electronic age by Joel Wells.

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Getting a foothold on therapy

HOW DOES ANALYSIS CURE?
Heinz Kohut, edited by A. Goldberg and P.E. Stepansky
University of Chicago, $25, 240 pp.

SELF PSYCHOLOGY AND THE HUMANITIES
Heinz Kohut, edited by C.R. Strozier
W.W.Norton, $27.95, 290 pp.

Michael Eigen

HEINZ KOHUT has earned a place in the history of psychoanalysis and contemporary culture, although it is by no means clear what this place is. He claims to have discovered two new tranferences — the mirror and idealizing transferences — which disclose important developmental issues and are central for understanding the self.

In the mirror transference the patient exhibits an archaic grandiose self which demands admiration. In the idealizing transference the patient bolsters his shaky sense of self by merging with a godlike other. Both positions ("I am god — you are god") dramatize early needs for emphatic responsiveness which went awry. To be crudely schematic, the individual failed to find the "gleam in mother's eye" which would make him feel valuable, or failed to find a father capable of tolerating the idealization and gradual disillusionment which would enable him to feel viable. These needs are now repeated with the analyst who must tolerate their unfolding, interpret them, and sustain a genuine growth process.

Kohut has pulled out of Freud the latter's concern with narcissism and placed it center stage. The problem of narcissism was central for Freud too. Freud's concern throughout his case portrayals was the wounded self. He spoke of the "blow to the face" or "stab in the heart" that occasioned hurt feelings, rage, neurotic symptomatology, and psychopathic action. Freud was a keen observer of processes involved in slights to self-esteem and characteristically viewed instinctual drives from the viewpoint of how they mortified the ego. He saw his own psychology as a grand blow to Western man's ego.

Why then has Kohut met with so much flack in the psychoanalytic field — and also so much admiration? This question cannot be fully answered here, but consideration of what Kohut came to call the *selfobject* is crucial. The selfobject is a term Kohut coined to depict the use of another as food for the self. In Kohut's view, the self does not begin as a bundle of drives but as a vital unit which requires emphatic resonance in order to thrive. To an important extent this remains so throughout our lifetime. We depend on the emphatic responsiveness of others for our sustenance, well-being, and development. Through genuine interaction grandiosity transforms into healthy ambition. Idealization transforms into sound values. Both play a role in maintaining self-esteem and inspiration.

Ambitions and values are mediated by talents and skills. These three together come to constitute the core of a *nuclear self* with its own intrinsic design and program. Kohut classifies selfobject transferences in terms of these three divisions:

> (1) those in which the damaged pole of ambitions attempts to elicit the confirming-approving responses of the selfobject (mirror transference); (2) those in which the damaged pole of ideals searches for a selfobject that will accept its idealization (idealizing transference); and (3) those in which the damaged intermediate area of talents and skills seeks a selfobject that will make itself available for the reassuring experience of essential alikeness (twinship or alter ego transference).

Kohut does not think an individual can or ought to be remade. But a shift for the better in one or another of these spheres can make an enormous difference in the quality of one's life. Kohut measures progress in therapy in terms of gains in humor, creativity, empathy, and wisdom.

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In *Self Psychology and the Humanities*, Kohut applies his clinical insights to contemporary Western culture, with special emphasis on the tragic structure of the nuclear self. In essays on courage, leadership, and group psychology, Kohut stresses how living in terms of one's nuclear program time and again brings one in conflict with the prevailing culture. He illuminates the role of the selfobject in sustaining the nuclear self against great odds and relates variations in this theme to tragic figures in politics, war, social movements, literature, and religion.

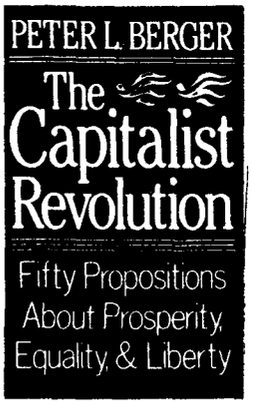
Kohut calls on psychoanalysts to apply the insights of self psychology to themselves and the psychoanalytic movement. He tries his own hand at analyzing Freud's transference to Fliess. Freud uses Fliess as a prop to fuel his creative work. When the work was over, the need for someone to bounce off faded, and Freud dropped Fliess. While others have noted that Freud used idealization to cope with ambivalence, Kohut points out that Freud projected his own sense of creativity onto Fliess. His idealization of the other preserved his sense of creativity once removed, until he could claim his own back.

Kohut writes that Freud's psychology is one of man in conflict with his instinctual urges. Kohut finds that contemporary problems have more to do with whether one has a self at all than with guilt over sexual and aggressive drives. The sense of fragmentation and emptiness are frequently covered over by sex and aggression. Perhaps in the Freudian family parental overstimulation induced the sorts of anxieties and inhibitions he witnessed. But in contemporary life there is greater danger of failure of maternal emphatic responsiveness, or the absence of paternal ideals which support a cohesive and directed sense of aliveness. Our problem is how to make the best of the lessening of generational and sexual differences, to mine the virtue in what is evolving.

Self Psychology and the Humanities concludes with a series of interviews of Kohut by the editor, Charles B. Strozier, on psychoanalysis and history, cultural selfobjects, religion, and the plight and destiny of the human self. One feels in Kohut a genuine caring for human history and a sense of responsibility to do what he can.

Since 1971, when I first read *The Analysis of the Self*, I have guiltily wondered why I also sense a dullness in Kohut's work. I feel this again when I read these latest books, published posthumously and diligently edited. My conclusion is that the dullness I feel in Kohut's writings is not simply stylistic but something deeper and by no means easy to get at. Perhaps Kohut tries to be too balanced, too good. I miss Freud's ironic fierceness.

Kohut knows about narcissistic rage and wisely points out that the success of therapy hinges on dealing with the betrayal of grandiose and idealizing hopes. He sees more deeply into the positive aspect of religious feeling than Freud. He knows that there is something valuable in grandiosity and idealization which must undergo evolution, not merely suppres-



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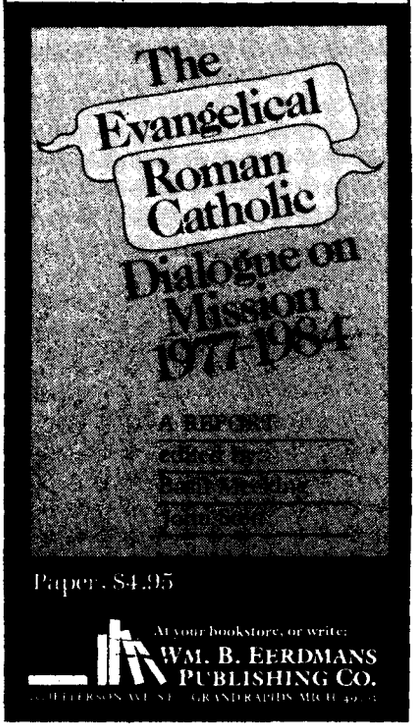

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sion. Perhaps it is Kohut's tie to ego psychology and terms like "neutralization" that play a role in the dullness. He writes of archaic grandiosity becoming "neutralized." I never liked such language because I don't want to be neutralized, and I doubt that Kohut wanted to be neutralized either. I suspect that Kohut did not quite get to the language he needed in order to explore the transformations he experienced, although he established a real foothold.

Is Kohut right to view the ambition-talents/skills-ideals arc as the main structure of the nuclear self? His formulations are wise and valuable in ordinary human and specialized clinical terms. But we would have to compare his phenomenology of the self with Jung's, Lacan's, Bion's, Winnicott's, and various existential psychologists before we could properly establish the limits and virtues of Kohut's very real findings. One thing is certain. No matter what framework we work with, grandiosity and idealization are among the foremost human capacities which must be studied if we are to survive, and survive well.

Seer of the darkest Sinai

AGAINST SILENCE
THE VOICE AND VISION OF ELIE WIESEL
Holocaust Library, $85 (three volumes), 1190 pp.

Jack Riemer

THERE are many paradoxes in the writings and in the life of Elie Wiesel. In this review of his collected essays and addresses, let me focus on just three.

The first is that few Jewish thinkers in our time have published as much or spoken as often as he has, and yet no one feels the imperative of silence as much as he does. He has written in almost every literary form — short story, novel, cantata, drama, essay, and vignette — and yet one of the motifs that appears over and over again in his writings is the need for silence. He feels that what has happened in our lifetime is too awesome to be described in words. We have lived through a second Sinai, a darker Sinai, whose name was Auschwitz, a Sinai that throws its shadow over the first one. And he feels that anyone who writes about this Sinai glibly, that anyone who thinks he can describe it or explain it easily, proves that he cannot. Just as Moses was told to take off his shoes because the ground he stood on was holy ground when he faced the burning bush, so Wiesel wants us to take off our pat phrases and our prosaic way of thinking when we draw near to the Holocaust. He wants us to leave it alone if we can, rather than commercialize it or use it for mundane purposes.

And so it is strange to see this peripatetic teacher crossing the country over and over again, speaking in synagogues and churches, on college campuses and in lecture halls, saying repeatedly: Hush! Listen! And be silent! But he is right because out of such silence there may emerge a deeper human response than can come from any words.

A second paradox is that no one has more reason to hate or to despair than he does, and yet no one is gentler and more full of hope. He has every right, every reason, to want revenge, and yet there is not a syllable of vengeance in his writings. Instead, there is a sense of sympathy for the world that now finds itself in a Jewish situation, in a precarious situation, and which must now turn to the Jews for instruction and guidance.

There is pain, unending pain within him, over the loss of the Jewish kingdom of his childhod that can never more be regained, but the pain does not lie dormant. It becomes a stimulant to action so that out of it there may come instruction and healing and blessing for humankind.

There is a certain naiveté behind all his writings and all his speaking. He seems to believe that it is possible to juxtapose words and weapons, that one can counter force with spirit, that one can overcome evil with instruction, that one can defeat destruction by study. One marvels that after what he has been through, after what he has seen, he can still hold on to such convictions, and yet he does. And sometimes — not often but sometimes —

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there are responses to his words that give reality to his hope and reason for his faith. Here a young student in his class learns how to understand his survivor-parent, and here a delegation stands with him at the Cambodian border and says a Kaddish because the past informs what they see before them, and here a desperate family in Argentina that feels abandoned learns there is concern as well as indifference in the world because of his visit.

How weigh such small gestures in the scales against all the indifference and callousness in the world? Only the Scalekeeper in heaven can make such a weighing, and yet we get caught up as we read his words in his hope that small deeds matter, that words *are* heard, and that lessons *do* register on the minds and souls of students. If a man with such a past can still believe in the future, how can we not?

And there is a third paradox to this man's life and thought. He comes from a tiny village far off the beaten track. And yet, this former cheder child who, if it were not for Hitler, would probably be writing talmudic *hiddushim* instead of novels, has somehow reached the seats of power and has been heard in the academies of learning, far beyond the borders of Sighet. And he has come to these places, not by denying Sighet, but in the name of Sighet.

The most dramatic example of this is what took place in Washington a year ago this past May. The president of the United States presented him with this country's most distinguished medal for service to humanity. That moment might have been enough in itself, the culmination of a long journey from Sighet to Auschitz to many other places around the globe to the Rotunda of the Congress of the mightiest power in the world. Most people would have been satisfied with that. They would have responded with polite words of thanks or even with obsequiousness. Wiesel chose to respond instead with blunt words of criticism of the president's trip to Bitburg. *"That place, Mr. President, is not your place. Your place is with the victims of the SS,"* he said in words that were heard all around the world. Whoever heard or read these words (which unfortunately came too late to be included in these volumes) heard the prophet Amos and the prophet Nathan speaking through his lips. Suddenly the past became present and the Bible came to life.

Suddenly the insignificant village of Sighet, whose Jewish population was so cruelly annihilated, suddenly that village became the Treasurehouse where the mighty words of the prophets were stored up until they could speak truth to power in Washington, thousands of miles away. Suddenly *Sighet towered over Washington*. For the words of Amos and of Nathan are on library shelves in Washington; they were living lights in Sighet.

Irving Abrahamson's seventy-page introduction to these volumes is a work of meticulous scholarship and the bibliography at the end is comprehensive. As one reads these three volumes one takes a journey through the last twenty-five years, a journey in the company of a

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"Building Genuine Community." A Conference Led by Dr. M. Scott Peck, October 30, 31, and November 1, 1986, Sarasota, Florida. For information: The Rev. Robert Stull, Institute for Christian Studies, Church of the Redeemer, 222 S. Palm Ave., Sarasota, Fla. 33577, (813) 955-4263.

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In Brief

FREEDOM AT A PRICE: AN ENGLISHWOMAN'S LIFE IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA. *by Rosemary Kavan, Schocken, $13.50, 280 pp.*

Rosemary Kavan met her husband during World War II. He was an intense, committed, and self-sacrificing Czech Communist in exile in London. She was a young English woman. She was not a political person, but was captivated. She quickly got a political education, or so she must have thought at the time. Pavel Kavan served his country, and his party, as a diplomat in London after the war. After the Communists took power in 1948, he returned to Prague to be joined by his wife and small sons. Disaster struck the Kavan family quickly. Pavel was implicated in the Slansky purge trials because of his London connections; Rosemary was sure he was innocent, and had to live the shock of hearing him confess publicly.

Then began her second, and real, political education — among the people, where she had to find work, a woman, a foreigner, and the mother of two young children. She relates this story humanly, not as a moralist. Yet its consequences on her political views and life become apparent when her husband was finally freed, only to die of a heart-attack in the crush of self-assigned work by which he tried to redeem himself and his view of what the Communist party must do.

That political education was also reflected in her life with her sons, the eldest of whom became a leader of the 1968 Prague Spring before being forced into exile, where his mother — who carried on the struggle of the Spring as long as she could despite the Russian occupation — eventually had to join him. She continued that work abroad, found love and happiness, only to die from cancer before seeing the publication of this fascinating book.

The "socialism with a human face" of the Prague Spring was not only a top-down reform within the Communist party. It was also part of that "New Left" youth revolt that erupted in Paris, Berlin, New York, and even London. I knew firsthand the ties that Rosemary Kavan established with her son's generation during the final Novotny years and in the first heady Dubcek moments. There was no doubt romanticism, a quest for identification, an easily abused moralism which all the "new lefts" shared. Rosemary captures some of the quality of those endless evenings (where this American talked about Marx, while his Czech

REVIEWERS

MARILYN J. YOUNG *and her husband,* MICHAEL K. LAUNER, *teach at Florida State University. She is an associate professor of communications, he is a professor of Russian.*

RABBI JACK RIEMER of Congregation Beth El, La Jolla, California, co-edited, with Dr. Nathaniel Stampfer, Ethical Wills: A Modern Jewish Treasury *(Schocken).*

MICHAEL EIGEN *is a psychologist and psychoanalyst practicing in New York City.*

DICK HOWARD *is Director of Euro-Links, and the author of* Marx to Kant *(SUNY).*

JAMES B. NELSON
on
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friends, in a melody of tongues, returned constantly to literature), which often concluded with a walk through the Old Town and up towards the Hradcarny Castle. But she captures them in the same language, the same gush, which had earlier marked her own leap to Marxism and indeed to post-war Czech Stalinism — with all that it entailed, and that she would regret; and with what she came also magically to transmute in her own person and experience.

Was Rosemary Kavan another of those naive, trusting souls who give their all for a theoretical good whose practical reality is a nightmare? Do the experiences of this infatuated English girl simply provide yet another variant of the old theme, the God-that-failed? Her story was in fact different, if only because she lived it through to the bitter end, honestly, consistently, and with a humor that was part English optimism, part dark Czech self-preservation. Although her faithful Stalinist husband was tried and convicted in the trumped-up Slansky purges, she remained, even after his death, in the adopted country whose spirit she came to share. The reality of bungling Stalinism was not something known from afar; it was constantly present to jolt her equally constant faith. Despite everything, she simply had her children to raise, honestly, and her life to live, honestly.

Freedom at a Price shows a woman's experience, both as individual and as political. It does not pretend to be didactic. With its own blend of English and Czech humor, in fact, it provides both history lesson and novel. The reader is the richer for it, as were all of those who were privileged to know Rosemary herself. DICK HOWARD

Correspondence

(Continued from page 450)

edge the reality of institutions that are characterized by a conscious and creative Catholic identity, a very genuine commitment to teaching excellence, and an increasing flood of scholarly publications? Even Andrew Greeley now confines his critique to Catholic graduate schools. Greeley's recent claim that "there is no evidence that the Catholic universities see the research function as an important part of a contribution that they should make to the church and to American life" is seriously misstated.

The difficulty in a pattern of possibly excessive self-critique is that it distorts reality, smears Catholic higher education, and misleads many people. In March, millions of Americans read Frank Deford's *Sports Illustrated* article on Catholic colleges and basketball. The article relied heavily on premises from the "breast-beating" literature on Catholic higher education. Deford's conclusion: since Catholic schools are bush league in academics, they shouldn't be big league in basketball.

Catholic colleges and universities are not bush league. They are institutions that have surged in excellence. To recognize this more adequately is also to recognize the leadership that has been provided by John Tracy Ellis and David J. O'Brien. RODGER VAN ALLEN

Preaching flexibility

Colorado Springs, Colo.

To the Editors: In regard to David O'Brien's article ["The Summons to Responsibility," June 6] about the problems of intellectuals in the church — why can't there be in cities, university churches or university Masses, where priest-professors would preach?

We now have youth Masses because we have come to the conclusion the young and the old don't like the same things. And we in cities let people gravitate to the parish — conservative, liberal, or whatever they like. The key to the problem is the homily. Nothing so annoys the young as an old-fashioned sermon and vice versa.

We simply are going to have to give up our fetish for unity (spell that conformity in all things) and introduce more variety. We live now in a very complex society; we must adapt to it. We must be more flexible, without losing the essentials, and try to be more understanding of the people's needs. It wouldn't hurt to use a little more common sense, while we're at it. REV. RAWLEY MYERS

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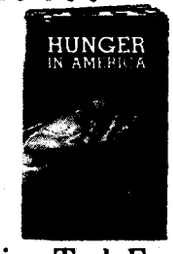

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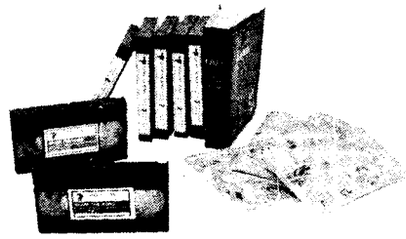
Neighborhood Bible Study Programs
Clusters of parishioners within the same neighborhood are encouraged to meet in the homes of fellow parishioners to study the Scriptures for the coming Sunday. Parishioners use the SHARE THE WORD magazine with SHARE THE WORD video as the foundation for learning and dialogue. Different parish clusters can meet on different days during the week so that many parishioners can view the same video cassette.

Parish Programs
■ Many different Bible study groups can meet weekly, mornings, afternoons and evenings, at the rectory, at the convent, in a classroom, in a parish learning center—wherever the parish has a television set with a video cassette player. One participant runs the video cassette that explains the coming Sunday's readings and leads the discussion following the outline in SHARE THE WORD magazine. Bibles should be kept handy for immediate reference.
■ Invite parishioners before and after the principal Masses on Sunday to a learning area equipped with a television set and a video cassette player to study and reflect on the Sunday lectionary readings proclaimed that day. If the parishioners meet after Mass, light refreshments can be served to help build community. This program could be coordinated by a parish deacon or the director of religious education.
■ SHARE THE WORD video cassettes can be an excellent aid to help lectors prepare for the Sunday readings.
■ Assemble a team of six or seven parishioners to meet with the priests and deacons at the rectory for one hour early in the week to view SHARE THE WORD video cassettes and to offer homily suggestions for the following Sunday. Each week the parishioner longest on the team leaves the group and is replaced by another parishioner to assure the flow of fresh insights.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults
Use SHARE THE WORD video cassettes and SHARE THE WORD magazine to enhance the lectionary as a primary catechetical tool.
■ View the video cassettes as part of the sessions during the week to help catechumens appreciate the depth of God's Word



and its relationship to all they will do and believe as Catholics. SHARE THE WORD magazine and Bibles should be kept handy.
■ View the video cassettes as part of the weekly training for sponsors, catechists, spiritual directors and other team ministers. Their personal ministries with catechumens during the week should be based on the Word of God.
■ View the video cassettes as the first part of dismissal sharing sessions on Sunday. A side effect of this will be that sponsors and team members can join the group after Eucharist and will be present for more of the personal sharing.

Religious Education for High School Students
■ As part of the religion program for Catholic high school juniors and seniors, and to encourage regular Sunday Mass attendance, spend one period each week viewing and discussing SHARE THE WORD video cassettes and SHARE THE WORD magazine. Student copies of the Bible should be at hand.
■ Build a weekly Bible study program for older CCD students around a viewing of SHARE THE WORD video cassettes and SHARE THE WORD magazine. Discussion of next Sunday's lectionary readings will encourage attendance at Mass and will contribute to Bible literacy as part of a solid religious education. Student copies of the Bible should be handy.

Campus Ministry
As a response to fundamentalism on the campus, sponsor regular weekly Catholic Bible study/sharing programs using SHARE THE WORD video cassettes, SHARE THE WORD magazine, and student editions of the Bible. Introduce the students to an authentic Catholic approach to the Scriptures.

Hospitals
Use closed circuit television to provide patients with the opportunity to reflect and pray the Scriptures by featuring SHARE THE WORD video at least once each day during the week, and a number of times on Sunday.

Downtown Chapels
Invite office workers to bring their bag lunches to a meeting room where they can watch SHARE THE WORD video cassettes while eating their lunches, and then enter into dialogue on Scripture with their fellow workers.

Military Bases
Use SHARE THE WORD video cassettes and SHARE THE WORD magazines on military bases at home and overseas, on board ship, in military and VA hospitals, as part of the weekly religious programming for men and women in uniform. SHARE THE WORD can provide a continuity in religious education for military personnel around the world.

Convents, Monasteries, Seminaries
Gather the community together once a week around SHARE THE WORD video for a common one-hour discussion of the lectionary readings. Focus the discussion on applications for the week's ministry--preaching, teaching, home visitation, counseling, etc.

Prison Ministry
Prison chaplains, parish priests, religious women and men, deacons, and volunteers will find SHARE THE WORD video cassettes and SHARE THE WORD magazine helpful in working with small groups of prisoners.

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